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Sir Henry Norris: English Ambassador, Huguenot Advocate

Thesis submitted to
The Graduate College of
Marshall University

In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
History

by

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April, 2003

Abstract

Sir Henry Norris: English Ambassador, Huguenot Advocate

Robert G. Lilly

Henry Norris served as English ambassador in France from 1567 to 1571, during the second and third French wars of religion, fought between Protestant Huguenots and the ruling Catholics. As ambassador Norris was able to help convince his reluctant Queen, Elizabeth I, to provide aid to her fellow Protestants in France. Elizabeth also entrusted Norris with the task of persuading the French authorities to refrain from sending forces to aid the deposed Scottish Queen Mary and Catholic rebels in the North of England. Despite contemporary criticism that he was inexperienced, and criticism from modern historians that he was ineffective, this thesis shows that Norris played an important role in England's diplomatic relationship with France during his ambassadorship, and his vocal support for the Huguenots helped pioneer the idea of religious pluralism accepted in modern democracies.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank my wife Lisa, who patiently allowed me the time to work on my thesis. I also want to thank my four children, Miles, Kaitlyn, Caleb and Leilani, who all put up with me spending numerous hours in front of the computer working on this thesis.

I would also like to thank the members of my thesis committee for their support and direction in writing this thesis. Dr. Bill Palmer, my thesis advisor, gave me advice in selecting a topic, insights into where to find primary source material, and direction in the structure of my thesis. Dr. Montserrat Miller gave me tremendous advice on grammatical construction as well as helping me see how my thesis fit into the historiography of this time period. Finally, Dr. David Kenley helped me attempt to make my thesis more understandable to those who were not familiar with the area and time period I was describing.

Finally, I would like to thank the many among the library and graduate college staff who answered my questions and helped me find material that I needed to complete my thesis.

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Introduction

This thesis involves studying the correspondence of Sir Henry Norris, the English ambassador to France between 1567 and 1571, primarily to William Cecil, Secretary to Queen Elizabeth, and to Elizabeth, as well as their letters to him. During much of this period the Huguenots, or French Protestants, were fighting against the Catholic majority in France, including the King and his family, in the second and third French religious wars. Most of Norris's correspondence discussed these conflicts, which were hot issues in the Privy Council of Queen Elizabeth. This research shows that Norris was strongly supportive of the Huguenot cause and repeatedly urged England to send aid to the French Protestants. Although Queen Elizabeth did not send any aid to the Huguenots during the second French religious war, Norris's correspondence played a large role in convincing her to aid the French Protestants in the third French religious war. Moreover, Norris's support of the Huguenots, a religious minority, in Catholic France, helped plant the seeds for religious pluralism in modern society, even though he would not have advocated such pluralism in his own country, England.

While ambassador to France, Norris provided numerous dispatches concerning the situation in France to Cecil and to Elizabeth. Quite a bit has been written about Francis Walsingham, Norris's successor in the ambassadorship in Paris, who later became Secretary of State. In addition, historians have written books about William Cecil, later known as Lord Burghley, Secretary to Elizabeth during this time, and about Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, both recipients of Norris's correspondence.¹ However, no journal articles, book chapters, or dissertations have focused solely on Norris's years as ambassador, how he viewed the French religious wars, and his role in English

¹See Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1962), and Elizabeth Jenkins, *Elizabeth and Leicester* (First American edition. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1962)..

foreign policy during this time.

The main primary source for this thesis is *Calendar of State Papers: Foreign Series*.² This reference documents the existing correspondence of men in the foreign service, including Norris, to officials in England, as well as responses to those letters. The letters of Norris chronicled many of the conflicts of the French religious wars, and gave commentary on what was occurring.

The letters of Norris are an important primary source for the history of the second and third religious wars in France and in English diplomatic history during this time. For example, N.M. Sutherland, in his book about the French religious wars as part of a wider European struggle, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559-1572*, uses Norris's letters extensively as primary source material for what occurred in the wars.³ Also, Conyers Read, in his biographical work on Secretary Cecil before he became Lord Burghley, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, employs the correspondence between Cecil and Norris to describe much of Cecil's career as it relates to his foreign diplomacy.⁴ Yet, while these historians utilized the letters of Ambassador Norris, they did so solely to relate the history of other events, and their reference to Norris was incidental to their main purposes. This thesis will focus on Norris himself, and his career as a diplomat in France.

In addition to analyzing the correspondence of Norris while ambassador in France, this thesis will also give some information about his life, before, during, and after his time as ambassador. Also, in analyzing the correspondence of Norris, this thesis will discuss the events he described, his reaction to and interpretation of these events, as well as how other events occurring in France and England related to what

²*Calendar of State Papers: Foreign Series, Elizabeth I* (23 vols., ed. Joseph Stevenson and W.B. Turnbull, etc. 1863-1950).

³N.M Sutherland, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559-1572* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1973).

⁴See above.

Norris was describing, and the impact these occurrences had on him, as well as the impact his correspondence had on English foreign policy. This thesis will thus discuss Norris's life and the important events that occurred in England and France as they impacted upon his career as ambassador.

By the time of the French religious wars England was Protestant and would thus seem to have a natural affinity for the Protestants in France. In fact, early in her reign, Elizabeth's secretary Cecil had bragged that one of the accomplishments of Elizabeth had been in aiding the Protestants in France.⁵ England had intervened during the first religious war in France, in the early 1560s, but the results had been less than favorable, and Elizabeth was reluctant to intercede again. Furthermore, Queen Elizabeth was no religious zealot, instead pursuing a middle ground in her own country. However, many of her ministers, including Cecil, favored giving aid to the Protestants. Norris sided with Cecil on this issue, and repeatedly encouraged English intervention in favor of the Protestants. Thus, while Elizabeth was reluctant to aid the Huguenots, members of her Privy Council were in favor of doing so.

Moreover, England was facing problems of its own which limited what it might do in France. One problem facing Elizabeth was that Mary, Queen of Scotland, was related to the powerful Guise family of France, who were great supporters of the Catholic cause in the French religious wars, and Mary had a claim to the crown of England. Fear of offending the Guise family also discouraged Elizabeth from interfering in France. Another important event in England during this time was the Northern rebellion in 1569, which tended to make Elizabeth and England more likely to come to the aid of the Huguenots, since there was a worry that the Lords who led the rebellion would receive aid from Catholics in France. This thesis will explore the effect of these and other events in England on the correspondence of Norris while ambassador in

⁵S. T. Bindoff, *Tudor England*, The Pelican History of England, vol. 5 (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1981), 203.

France.

In addition, this thesis will discuss and analyze the secondary sources concerning the second and third religious wars in France, foreign reaction to these wars, and the ambassadorship of Norris. R.J. Knecht, in his book *The French Wars of Religion, 1559-1598*, and Mack Holt, in *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629*, see the first three wars of religion, between 1562 and 1570, as part of an international religious conflict between Catholics and Protestant, with European powers entering to support one side or another.⁶ Holt states that the second religious war saw the Huguenots unable to match the Catholics militarily because the German Protestants and Queen Elizabeth refused their requests for aid.⁷ According to Holt, the third war saw the Cardinal of Lorraine championing Mary Queen of Scots, as a possible Catholic replacement for Protestant Queen Elizabeth of England, and foreign support to the Huguenots, strengthened them and allowed the war to be prolonged.⁸ In *The Transformation of Europe*, Charles Wilson describes the third French war of religion as part of an international conflict, with German mercenaries helping the Huguenots, but some French Catholics under the Cardinal of Lorraine trying to foment rebellion in England and overthrow the Protestant Queen Elizabeth.⁹ Thus, secondary sources have often described the second and particularly the third French war of religion as part of a broader European religious conflict, with a possible rebellion in England.

The secondary sources are divided regarding England's reaction to the second and third wars of religion. In *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, Conyers Read

⁶Knecht, R. J., *The French Wars of Religion 1559-1598*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman Publishing, 1996), 34-41; Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, 1997), 50-75.

⁷Ibid., 65.

⁸Ibid., 67. Holt does not specify the nation from which this Protestant support came.

⁹Charles Wilson, *The Transformation of Europe, 1558-1648* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), 121.

notes that Cecil and other officials wanted to intervene on behalf of the Protestants in France during the second and third wars of religion, but Elizabeth was reluctant to do so.¹⁰ R.B. Wernham, in *Before the Armada*, portrays Elizabeth as reluctant to enter the second French religious war, but aware that English privateers were helping the French Protestants.¹¹ He further finds that Elizabeth's primary concern with France during this period was to keep it out of Scotland, and was thus conciliatory towards France, and states that only after her excommunication in 1570, did Elizabeth become concerned that the Spanish and French might join with Catholics in Britain to fight against Protestant England.¹² D.J.B. Trim, in a recent article about English aid to the Huguenots during the early French wars of religion, documents and details the aid given to the French Protestants, but does not seem to recognize the fact that Elizabeth refused to give such aid during the second war.¹³ S.M. Sutherland, in *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the European Conflict: 1559-1572*, finds that events in the Netherlands, where Protestants were fighting against Catholics, led Elizabeth to become more involved in what he saw as the growing politico-religious conflict.¹⁴ Baird, in *History of the Rise of the Huguenots in France*, and Thompson in *The Wars of Religion in France*, both find that Elizabeth and England did give help to France during the third war of religion, but did so while denying they were doing so to the French government, and Norris was an active participant in this.¹⁵ Thus, most of the secondary

¹⁰Cecil, 392.

¹¹R.B. Wernham, *Before the Armada: The Emergence of the English Nation, 1485-1588* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966), 301-302.

¹²Wernham, 306, 308.

¹³D. J. B. Trim, "The 'Secret War' of Elizabeth I: England and the Huguenots during the early Wars of Religion, 1562-77," *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 27, no. 2 (1999): 189-199.

¹⁴S. M. Sutherland, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the European Conflict: 1559-1572* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1973) 68..

¹⁵Henry M. Baird, *History of the Huguenots of France*. Vol II (New York: Ames Press, 1879, reprinted 1970), 295; James Westfall Thompson, *The Wars of Religion in France, 1559-1576: The Huguenots, Catherine de Medici and Philip II* (Chicago, Illinois: The

sources do acknowledge that England gave some aid to French Protestants during the third war of religion, but they fail to fully discuss Norris's role in convincing Elizabeth to give this aid.

Other secondary sources downplay Norris's contributions to English policy regarding France. Conyers Read notes the difference between Cecil's strongly Protestant view and Elizabeth's reticence to become involved on the side of the French Protestants in the wars of religion, and stated that Norris had to walk a tightrope between these two.¹⁶ However, Norris's letters both to Elizabeth and Cecil show he was strongly Protestant, and the information he sent Cecil likely reinforced Cecil's desire to help the Huguenots. Another historian, Wallace MacCaffrey, has downplayed Norris's role as ambassador, stating that he was inexperienced and was nothing more than an observer and reporter of events during the French Religious wars, and that diplomacy was beyond him.¹⁷ MacCaffrey also states that the essential transactions between England and the French Protestants took place in London rather than Paris.¹⁸ MacCaffrey further asserts that after making threats against the French Catholics Elizabeth softened her stance and lessened her threats after the French court sent an envoy to her.¹⁹ MacCaffrey fails to mention, however, that this envoy came in response to statements to the French court that Elizabeth made through Norris, and that these statements were themselves in large part prompted by Norris's letters to Elizabeth trying to convince her to help the Huguenots.

Moreover, Norris inspired enough confidence in his queen to stay for four years in France as ambassador during the first and second French wars of religion. Early in

University of Chicago Press, 1909), 373.

¹⁶*Cecil*, 394.

¹⁷Wallace MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), 182.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 182-183.

his position some were reluctant to keep the relatively inexperienced Norris as ambassador.²⁰ Also, although Norris asked to be recalled to England in early 1569, when he thought he was unable to be effective and was being persecuted somewhat by the French government for his support for the Huguenot cause, he went on to stay as ambassador in France for four years. Also, during the time of Norris's ambassadorship, Elizabeth faced the rebellion in Northern England and excommunication from the Catholic Church, events which would give credence to Norris's assertions that there was a Catholic conspiracy against Protestants. Furthermore, Norris was the ambassador in France after Mary, Queen of Scots came to England, and the English were worried about Mary receiving aid from the Guise family in France to help her obtain the English throne, to which she could lay some claim. Thus, not only was Norris's ambassadorship to France during a tumultuous time in France, but there were many important occurrences in England during that time as well, and Elizabeth trusted Norris to help keep French forces out of England.

In his letters Norris described the events that occurred during the second and third wars of religion, as well as before, between and after the wars. His descriptions of the conflicts were not simply unbiased accounts, however. At one point Elizabeth accused Norris of favoring the Huguenots too much in his writing. Later, the French royal family also accused Norris, not only of hurting their cause by his correspondence, but also of sending letters from Huguenots along with his own dispatches. Norris's letters portrayed the religious conflicts from the Protestant point of view, and therefore presented the manner in which many Englishmen would have viewed the conflicts.

Norris presented the conflicts as a Catholic persecution against French Protestants, but also viewed them as campaigns that could spread to England. Norris

²⁰Queen Elizabeth had send Norris to France to act on behalf of the French Protestants. Norreys Jephson O'Connor, *Godes Peace and the Queene: Vicissitudes of a House, 1539-1615* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934), 25.

continually put the blame for the wars on the Catholics, even when the Huguenots were the aggressors, such as at the start of the second religious war. He would claim that the Huguenots were simply fighting to preserve their religion and asserted, sometimes with good reason, that the Royal forces were attempting to prevent the practice of the Protestant religion and destroy the Huguenot leaders. Norris also found that if the Catholics succeeded in destroying the Protestants in France, they would turn their attention elsewhere, including to England. Thus, Norris viewed the religious conflicts in France as being perpetrated by Catholics intent on stopping Protestant worship, first in France and then in England.

Norris's correspondence encouraging aid for the Huguenots did not bear fruit during the second religious war, but aid was forthcoming in the third French war of religion.²¹ Thus it would be important to analyze his letters to determine whether and what type of influence he had on England during this time. Norris's letters to England during this time not only show his own personal thoughts about what was occurring, and gave an important first-hand account of the second and third French wars of religion, but the letters also presented the views that Elizabeth and her Privy Council received during this time, particularly Cecil. While Cecil and the Privy Council favored aiding the Huguenots during the second and third French wars of religion it was Norris's correspondence that largely kept them informed of what was occurring, and his insistence on aid to the Huguenots played a role in convincing Elizabeth that the Huguenots deserved and needed English aid. Also, Elizabeth showed great trust in Norris by assigning him work to prevent the French from sending forces to Britain to aid Queen Mary. Further, the honors Elizabeth gave to Norris indicate that she believed he had served England well as ambassador. Historians, however, have not given Norris's diplomatic career the credit it deserves. This thesis will help shed more light on his role

²¹Ibid., 419-421.

as ambassador.

Norris's correspondence also sheds a light on the growth of the idea of religious pluralism. In supporting the Huguenots, and in advocating their right to worship as a minority in Catholic France, Norris put forth the Huguenot argument that the French Protestants could worship in a different religion than the King yet remain loyal to their monarch. While Norris likely would not have encouraged the growth or spread of religious minorities in his own Protestant England, his correspondence is important in showing the beginnings of the religious pluralism that has come to be accepted in modern democracies. Thus, the study of Norris's correspondence is not only important to show his role in the relationship between England and France during his ambassadorship, but also to show some of the early stages of the growth of the idea of religious pluralism.

Chapter 1

An Uneasy Peace Turns to War

Sir Henry Norris served as English Ambassador to France from 1567 to 1571. During this time Catholics and Protestants fought the second and third French wars of religion. Throughout his ambassadorship, Norris acted as an advocate for the French Protestants, or Huguenots. He repeatedly wrote to London encouraging England to send aid to the Huguenots and presented the Catholics as the aggressors, while portraying the Huguenots as simply fighting for their religion. In the second war, from September of 1567, to March of 1568, Queen Elizabeth of England refused to send aid to the Protestants, despite the urgings of Norris and her own Privy Council. However, in the third war of religion, lasting from September of 1568 to August of 1570, England did send some aid to the Huguenots. Norris's correspondence in favor of the Huguenots must be seen as crucial and as having certainly contributed to the Privy Council's success in persuading Elizabeth to send some aid to the French Protestants.

Henry Norris's father had at one time been close to King Henry VIII, but that had not given him protection when the King sought for a way to end his second marriage. Henry VIII had killed Norris's father to help incriminate Anne Boleyn, the mother of Queen Elizabeth, when Henry decided to seek a new wife. Elizabeth believed that Norris's father was innocent and was always kind to Norris and his family.¹ Norris had married Margaret or Margery, the daughter of Sir John Williams, which brought him great wealth and more favor from Queen Elizabeth, as Norris's wife had been a friend of Elizabeth during her days of captivity before becoming Queen.² Norris inherited his father-in-law's estate, which included livestock and pasture. Norris occupied a house

¹A.L. Rowse, *The Expansion of Elizabethan England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), 348.

²O'Connor, 25.

on this estate called Rycote in the center of an area in Oxfordshire for raising sheep,³ and Queen Elizabeth would often come to visit there in the years after Norris had served as ambassador.⁴ Elizabeth conferred the honor of knighthood on Norris on September 6, 1566.⁵ Prior to his appointment as ambassador, Norris was already well-to-do, but his service would win him greater favor from the Queen.

Before the appointment of Henry Norris as ambassador of France, in the first French war of religion, Elizabeth had intervened on behalf of the Huguenots, with less than successful results. In March of 1562, the Duke of Guise, the uncle of Mary, Queen of Scots, had started the first war by attacking and massacring a Huguenot congregation at Vassy, although the attack was not wholly unprovoked.⁶ Guise had come to hear Mass in this town, but the congregation of Huguenots was nearby, and their assembly was contrary to law. The frightened Huguenots initially spoke to Guise, then barricaded themselves in the barn where they were meeting and threw stones at Guise and his soldiers, and in the ensuing fight 23 Protestants were killed and more than 100 were injured.⁷ This started the first in a series of wars between French Catholics and Protestants.

The English intervened at the request of the French Protestants, but did so in a failed attempt to gain French territory. In response to requests for aid from envoys from Louis of Bourbon, Prince of Condé, the English offered men and money in return for possession of Dieppe and Le Havre as pledges that Calais, lost by England to France in 1559, would eventually be returned to England.⁸ England paid almost 25,000 pounds

³ John Walter, "A 'Rising of the People?' The Oxfordshire Uprising of 1596," *Past and Present* 107 (1985): 114.

⁴ Alison Weir, *The Life of Elizabeth I* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998), 231.

⁵ O'Connor, 35.

⁶ Wernham, 264.

⁷ Donald Stone, Jr., *France in the Sixteenth Century: A Medieval Society Transformed* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), 118-119.

⁸ Wernham, 265.

directly to Huguenot troops during the first French war of religion.⁹ Elizabeth intervened not so much to help the Protestants, but because she believed that France was breaking apart and she wanted some of the spoils for herself.¹⁰ Condé promised the return of Calais to England after a Huguenot victory. While England occupied Dieppe and Le Havre in October, 1562, however, Elizabeth refused to risk losing them by sending troops to help defend Rouen, and this Huguenot stronghold fell to the Duke of Guise a few weeks later.¹¹ The Duke had offered toleration to the Huguenots if they would refuse to allow the English a foothold in France, and in December, 1562, the Queen Mother made a similar offer to Condé if he would help expel the English, and Condé subsequently urged Elizabeth to abandon her claims in French territory.¹² After Huguenots assassinated the Duke of Guise in February, 1563, both sides accepted the Peace of Amboise in March of that year, which ended this first civil war.¹³ The peace agreement allowed the opposing factions to unite in recovering Dieppe and Le Havre from the English in March of 1563.¹⁴ This failed attempt to intervene in the first French war of religion left Elizabeth hesitant to do so again.

Sir Henry Norris became ambassador to France in 1567, with some, but apparently not much, experience in foreign affairs. In 1562, during the first French war of religion, Elizabeth had sent Norris to the French court to act on behalf on the French Protestants, and to declare that Elizabeth was prepared to defend them.¹⁵ Norris became English ambassador to France after his predecessor, Thomas Hoby,¹⁶ died on

⁹Trim, 191.

¹⁰Stone, 119.

¹¹Holt, 56.

¹²Wernham, 265-266.

¹³John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 267.

¹⁴Guy, 267-268.

¹⁵O'Connor, 25.

¹⁶Hoby was the brother-in-law of William Cecil. MacCaffrey, 152-153. Cecil was the principal secretary to Elizabeth during the first 14 years of her reign, and it was Cecil and Elizabeth who shaped England's foreign policy. Wernham, 236.

July 13, 1566, after serving only a few months in office. However, apparently due to the suddenness of Hoby's death, Norris, as the new ambassador, was unable to assume his post until January, 1567. When Norris arrived in France, the Huguenots and the Catholics were at peace under the Edict of Pacification of Orleans.¹⁷ Norris was inexperienced in diplomacy, but was a member of a courtier family favored by Elizabeth, and the Queen even liked to visit the Norris home at Rycote.¹⁸ Norris also had inherited lands in the North of England in the territory of Lord Dacre, as he wrote to Cecil while ambassador in France to look after these lands for him.¹⁹ Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, a previous ambassador to France, recommended that Norris be replaced by Henry Killigrew, whom Throckmorton believed would better be able to better help the Huguenots.²⁰ Still, Norris was to stay as English ambassador to France for four years, and, as will be shown, was quite an advocate of both English interests and the Huguenot cause.

Henry Norris arrived in France on January 12, 1567, and sent a letter on that day to William Cecil from Bowline, notifying him of his arrival, and stating that he would make his way to Paris as soon as possible.²¹ Norris came to Paris on January 20, and sent Queen Elizabeth a letter dated January 26 describing his welcome.²² King Charles IX²³ and the Queen Mother, Catherine de Medici²⁴ received Norris on January 21, but he spent more time in his letter to Elizabeth discussing the Protestant leaders Condé,

¹⁷*Calendar of State Papers: Foreign Series, Elizabeth I, 1566-68* (London: Longman & Co., etc., 1871), xix.

¹⁸MacCaffrey, 182.

¹⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 578.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 153.

²¹*Ibid.*, 164.

²²*Ibid.*, 168.

²³Charles was the king of France from 1560 until his death in 1574. Holt, 222.

²⁴Catherine de Medici was the Queen of France with her husband, King Henry II, from 1547-1559, then Queen Mother from 1559 to 1589, while her sons ruled as king. Holt, 223-224.

Admiral Coligny²⁵ and the Queen of Navarre, whom he noted had returned to their homes, but he also told of threats from the King to a religious minister who had been staying in the home of the Queen of Navarre at Paris.²⁶ Although he was ambassador to France, the early correspondence of Norris in his office shows the concern he had for the Protestant leaders and not just for the legal leaders of France.

Despite the fact that there was a peace between the Protestants and the Catholics in France at this time, Norris seemed very concerned with religion and the potential Catholic-Protestant conflict. This is perhaps because the leaders of the various factions in France, despite the peace, were concerned with the dormant conflict. On February 2, Norris wrote to Cecil that there was a great conflict in the King's council over religion.²⁷ In another letter to Cecil on that date, Norris expressed a fear which must have been on the minds of many Englishmen at that time, namely that violence against French Protestants could spread elsewhere. He claimed that there had been rumors that the Holy Roman Emperor, the Turks, the Pope and the French King had decided to join together to suppress Protestants in France, Germany and England.²⁸ The threat of a broad plot by Catholic powers to destroy Protestants, including in England, would be a continuing theme of Norris's letters.

Although there was peace in France between the Huguenots and the Catholics at this time, there was certainly friction between the two factions, which Norris did not fail to note, particularly when Protestants were suffering. In March of 1567, the Queen

²⁵Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France, was one of the leading French noblemen to convert to the Protestant religion. Holt, 222.

²⁶*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 168.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 171.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 172. This general Catholic threat against Protestants, including England, had been discussed in 1566 in parliament by Sir Ralph Sadler, also a member of the Privy Council, who asserted that after the Pope, French King and other Catholic leaders had stamped out Protestantism in their own countries, they would come to England. J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1953, 1964), 137-138. Sadler had served England in Scotland, both diplomatically and militarily, and was an expert on Scottish affairs. Wernham, 150, 238, 250-251.

Mother, according to Norris, had taken actions against those who professed to be of the reformed religion, and she banished 27 men from the French royal court, apparently because of their religion.²⁹ Norris did not limit himself to reporting events detrimental to the Protestant cause only at Paris . Later in the month he reported that at Lyons there had been some “disorder” over religion and a Protestant meeting house had been burned.³⁰ Near the end of March, Norris would have concerns for more than just the treatment of French Protestants.

England, or at least the English monarchs, had once held much of what would become France, dating back to William the Conqueror, who brought Normandy under control of the throne of England, and added to by the holdings of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, his Queen. Due to military losses, particularly in the Hundred Years War, by the time that Norris went to France as ambassador, all English territory on the mainland had been lost to the French, including the last English possession in France, Calais. The English had lost Calais during the reign of Mary, in January, 1558, when the Duke of Guise had taken the city for France.³¹ When Elizabeth came to the throne later in 1558, one of her first tasks was to make peace with France in the war that had lost Calais. As part of the treaty that established this peace, the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis, made on April 2, 1559, Elizabeth ceded Calais to France, but France promised to return the city to England in eight years or forfeit 500,000 crowns.³²

Elizabeth tried to reclaim Calais prior to the expiration of the eight years. During the first religious war in France, in 1562, Elizabeth had occupied Le Havre and demanded Calais. However, by 1563, at about the time the first French religious war ended, the English troops were forced to abandon Le Havre and Elizabeth’s desire to

²⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 185.*

³⁰*Ibid.*, 193.

³¹Wernham, 232.

³²*Ibid.*, 244-245.

regain Calais at this time went unfulfilled.³³ In fact, by the Treaty of Troyes in April, 1564, which officially ended England's military foray on the continent which was allegedly made to help the Huguenots, England lost Calais as well as the promised indemnity set forth in the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis.³⁴ Despite this second treaty, Elizabeth did not give up her quest to regain the last English possession on the continent.

One of Norris's first official duties as ambassador was to aid in what would prove to be an unsuccessful attempt to regain Calais. Cecil had written Norris in early March to tell him that the Queen, within a month, would seek the return of Calais.³⁵ Not only would Norris be involved in attempting to retrieve Calais from the French, but he would receive help from Sir Thomas Smith,³⁶ who was being sent from England for that purpose.³⁷ Both Smith and Norris received their commission and instructions from the Queen, through Cecil. Despite the failed attempt at obtaining Calais in the 1560s, the English still claimed title to Calais by the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis.³⁸ Norris reported to Elizabeth on March 26, 1567 that the French King had received him with kindness on March 20, where he orally reported Queen Elizabeth's demand regarding Calais, followed by the demand in writing the next day at the request of the king.³⁹ Norris was aware the attempt to regain Calais would cause a stir in Paris, but he advised Elizabeth and Cecil that this would be the best time to attempt to obtain the city, since the French forces were divided, the King was unable to trust his own forces, and the French lacked

³³Ibid., 264-267.

³⁴Guy, 268.

³⁵*Cecil*, 390.

³⁶Smith had served as ambassador to France from September of 1562 to May of 1566. Mary Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Office* (University of London: The Athlone Press: 1964) 89, 117.

³⁷See *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 195.

³⁸Ibid., 195-196.

³⁹Ibid., 196-197.

money.⁴⁰ Norris thus believed that the religious differences in France could work to the advantage of the English, and possibly allow them to regain Calais.

While England was requesting the return of Calais, in April and May of 1567, Norris was reporting that foreign powers were becoming involved on behalf of France against England. Norris reported that the French King had requested the aid of both the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of Spain to help him retain Calais.⁴¹ Though Norris stated that the French were boasting that Elizabeth would have neither Calais nor any recompense, he still encouraged the action to recover the city.⁴² After Norris had met with the French King, and then delivered the request of Elizabeth for Calais in writing, it took him a while to arrange another meeting with the King for himself and for Thomas Smith. The French King was angry at the demand for Calais and Norris and Smith had to go to Chantilly and pay 30,000 francs to assuage his anger and have him meet with them on April 24.⁴³ It is not clear whether this was the only meeting with the French king, but according to an anonymous report of the negotiations dated May 10, 1567, when the King gave his response he told Smith and Norris that he believed Elizabeth had forfeited her rights to Calais.⁴⁴ Despite the efforts by Norris and others the French refused to return Calais and the matter was eventually dropped. Queen Elizabeth was not happy with this result, however, and she notified Norris of her displeasure with the outcome.⁴⁵

While efforts were being made regarding Calais, however, Norris did not neglect the growing religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants in France, although they were officially at peace. He reported to both Throckmorton and Cecil that someone

⁴⁰Ibid., 197, 208, 210.

⁴¹Ibid., 210.

⁴²Ibid., 208, 210.

⁴³Ibid., 219.

⁴⁴Ibid., 226-227.

⁴⁵*Cecil*, 391.

named Marshall Bourdillon had died on April 4, but did not describe him as a Catholic, nor discuss the significance of his death in the context of the Catholic-Protestant religious conflict, other than to comment that he had heard that some of the company of Monluc⁴⁶ were forced to stay low because of complaints against them.⁴⁷ In contrast, a letter from Thomas Barnaby to Leicester⁴⁸ written from Paris on April 11, 1567, explained that the death of Bourdillon concerned the Catholics, as he was one of the chief supporters of their cause and was the best soldier in France.⁴⁸ Moreover, in a letter dated April 18, 1567, on which the signature and address were obliterated, an unknown author stated that rumors indicated that Marshall Bourdillon had discovered at the time of his death a conspiracy among the Protestants, noting that they were preparing horses and arms,⁴⁹ apparently surmising that this may have been a cause of Bourdillon's death. Norris did not report the significance for the Catholics in his letters about the death of Bourdillon, although he may have not had all the information as the unknown author of this letter, but certainly he would have known that Bourdillon was a significant Catholic.

Norris gave great emphasis in his letters at this time to affronts or attacks against the Protestants. In the letter to Cecil in which he reported the death of Bourdillon, Norris described in detail of some problems facing Admiral Coligny, one of the leading Protestants, on account of his religious opposition to the crown. Norris stated in this letter dated April 6, that the King, prompted by suspicions of the King of Spain, had questioned Coligny, as to whether he had sent representatives to Constantinople to

⁴⁶Blaise de Monluc was a gentleman of Gascony and an influential Catholic. *Massacre*, 34.

⁴⁷*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 200, 201.

⁴⁸Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, was a close associate of Queen Elizabeth, with whom she became infatuated. Wernham, 238, 252, 260, 437.

⁴⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 204.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 210. Although the text states that Bourdillon discovered a "conspiracy *against* the Protestants," this is clearly an error, as he was a staunch Catholic and would not be worried about a conspiracy against the Huguenots (emphasis added).

seek aid for the Protestants, whether he would aid Protestants in Flanders against the King of Spain, and perhaps most importantly, whether Coligny was aware if any of “those of the [Protestant] religion” who were arming themselves and planning war. Norris reported that the Admiral protested that he was innocent of the first two charges and knew of no Protestants that were preparing for war, but cautioned that if they were molested they would defend themselves.⁵⁰ Norris’s correspondence to Cecil makes it appear that the Catholics were the sole aggressors. By neglecting to explain the importance of the death of Bourdillon to the Catholic cause, with the resultant conclusion that the Protestants may have caused his death, Norris clearly was attempting to put the Protestants in a more favorable light.

According to Norris, not only did the French Protestants need to worry about attacks from the French Catholic majority, they also had to be concerned about foreign Catholic powers. In his letter to Queen Elizabeth dated April 19, 1567, Norris reported that the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of Spain were gathering larger armies than they needed to control their own subjects and that French Protestants, worried that these armies would be used against them, were on their guard.⁵¹

Norris later reported to the Queen, on May 1, 1567, and to Cecil, on May 2, that the Lords of Berne, in Switzerland, had armed their town in anticipation that the King of Spain might attack Geneva, and then apparently the rest of Switzerland, and that many Frenchmen had gone to help defend the town. Norris also stated that Huguenots feared that after Switzerland Philip would come into France to attack Protestant cities there and make an alliance with the French crown.⁵² How he would be in a position as ambassador in Paris to learn of the sizes of these other European armies is not clear, although he may have simply been reporting the beliefs of the Huguenots. Moreover,

⁵⁰Ibid., 201.

⁵¹Ibid., 210.

⁵²Ibid., 219-221.

he may have included these in his letters to Elizabeth in an attempt to get her to agree to consider aiding the French Protestants if she believed other foreign powers would intervene.

Although the Protestants and Catholics were at peace, Norris's letters show they believed another war was likely to erupt. Norris informed Queen Elizabeth on May 12, that those "of the religion" both in France and in Flanders were speaking boldly that the wars of religion were not yet ended, yet he did not explain whether these statements were meant as threats against the Catholics or out of a belief that the Catholics would attack them.⁵³ Further, Norris reported not only the call to arms in Switzerland, but also informed Cecil on May 11, that the inhabitants of Paris were arming themselves. Here too he did not specify whether it was the Protestants or the Catholics or both who were preparing themselves for war, explaining that those who did so claimed it was to defend against King Philip's power, indicating that it was the Protestants who were arming.⁵⁴

On May 19, Norris wrote Throckmorton that there were rumors that a confederacy had been formed between the Pope, the Holy Roman Emperor, the King of Spain and the Dukes of Savoy and Florence to besiege Protestant Geneva and then to turn their attention to France.⁵⁵ Norris went on in another letter to Throckmorton to claim that there were many men of arms in Italy who were not only planning to attack the Protestants in Geneva and France, but also boasted about what they would do in England, and hinted that the Catholics in France would be part of a general Catholic conspiracy against Protestants.⁵⁶ In a letter to the Queen dated May 24, Norris declared that the French Catholics had joined in a league with King Philip of Spain and other Catholics to fight against the Huguenots and other Protestants. He reported that both the Duke of Alva and the Duke of Savoy had deployed men ready to fight, and also

⁵³Ibid., 228-229.

⁵⁴Ibid., 228.

⁵⁵Ibid., 234.

⁵⁶Ibid., 235-236.

stated that men had been deployed near Lyon on advice from their ambassador in Spain. Norris also reported that the Ambassador of Spain had prevented Protestant refugees from the low countries from seeking refuge among other Protestants in Paris.⁵⁷ By these statements Norris was attempting to persuade Elizabeth to believe that other countries were involved in French religious affairs and that a fear that she would be the only ruler to intervene was unfounded.

Norris was also worried that this foreign influence in France would lead to troubles for Protestant England. In a letter in late May to Cecil, while acknowledging that the French King had denied wanting to have war with England, Norris reported that some in France were saying that there would be wars between England and France.⁵⁸ A letter about a week later to Cecil had Norris stating that this “Catholic League” intended to “overthrow the Protestants of France, Flanders, and England,” and he asked Cecil to make sure the Queen was apprised of this.⁵⁹ Thus not only did Norris report that foreign nations were planning on coming into France to attack the French, he also made sure to report rumors to Elizabeth that the “international” Catholic conspiracy, including France, might even make its way into England.

In Scotland, an event occurred that would come to have important consequences for England. On June 15, 1567, Protestants in Scotland, upset with Queen Mary’s marriage, rebelled and took their queen prisoner. This appeared to be advantageous for England, as Mary was dethroned and this rival to Elizabeth’s throne was also discredited, and the Protestant government of Scotland would seek a closer alliance with England.⁶⁰ Norris, however, did not appear to have been affected by this event, as he did not mention the Scottish rebellion in his correspondence. Mary would become an important concern for Norris later, however.

⁵⁷Ibid., 236.

⁵⁸Ibid., 238.

⁵⁹Ibid., 243.

⁶⁰Wernham, 273.

During the summer, many French Catholics began to worry about the nearby Spanish troops, and Norris saw this as an opportunity for England to get involved in France. By July the French participation in a league with other Catholic powers had apparently broken down, at least in Norris's eyes, as he was reporting that the Pope had promised parts of France to the Spanish King, the Holy Roman Emperor was attacking parts of France and the Duke of Savoy had allied himself with Swiss Catholics.⁶¹ Norris reported to both Elizabeth and Cecil that the French were now worried both about the Spanish as well as their own Protestant countrymen.⁶² Norris told Elizabeth that the French feared that not only incursions from the Emperor and the Spanish King, but they also were worried that Elizabeth would be a third foreign power to intervene. Whether or not the Spanish and other foreign powers were intent on attacking Protestants or France as a whole, Norris believed that it meant that England should also invade its neighbor across the channel. As he had noted to Elizabeth while she was contemplating taking action to recover Calais, Norris believed that the time was good for the English to take military action in France.⁶³ Norris further told Cecil that with all of the problems besetting the French, he had never seen a people "more dismayed," and claimed that the time had never been better for the English to make a claim or enterprise in France.⁶⁴ In the space of two months Norris had found that a joint effort by Catholic powers against Protestants in France was a reason for England to militarily intervene in France and then renewed this recommendation when some in this Catholic league were thought to be turning against France, which was also facing problems with its Protestant minority. It appears that while he may have wanted England to intervene on behalf of the Huguenot cause for religious reasons, Norris also hoped that England would come into France to help itself.

⁶¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 269.*

⁶²*Ibid.*, 269, 270.

⁶³*Ibid.*, 269.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 269-270.

In the summer of 1567, Norris, acting at the request of Cecil, began to urge the Huguenots to use force to protect themselves in matters of religion. On July 6, Norris wrote Cecil to tell him that, according to the secretary's previous instructions, he had met with a Mr. Stewart to urge the Protestants "to awake in the defence of religion," as "no mercy is to be hoped at the Papists' hands."⁶⁵ Mr. Stewart was pleased with Norris's remarks, but believed that if Elizabeth would help with only 100,000 crowns it would aid the Protestant cause.⁶⁶ Norris reminded Cecil ten days later that the Protestants had asked for money from Queen Elizabeth.⁶⁷ Norris must have felt the need was urgent, because he repeated the demand to Cecil again in August. Prefacing his remarks by praising Cecil, stating that religion would be "as cold in England as in other places" without Cecil's help, Norris claimed that the Protestants believed that an attack against them could occur at any time, and he "[h]umbly crave[d]" that they would soon have good news from England regarding their request for financial assistance.⁶⁸ Thus, even before the second French religious war started, Norris was anxious for English aid to reach the Huguenots, and he was trying to convince Cecil and Elizabeth that they should help the French Protestants.

According to Norris, events were occurring that suggested the Huguenots would soon be required to take up arms without any encouragement from the English. On July 10, Norris reported to Cecil that Condé had recently left the French court discontented in such a manner that it was thought that the Protestants would shortly take up arms in their own defense.⁶⁹ Admiral Coligny was also led to believe at court that he was not

⁶⁵Ibid., 273. Stewart was one of the men of James Stewart, the Earl of Murray, who was half-brother to Mary Stewart, and the Stewart contacted by Norris was perhaps a bastard half-brother of Lord Murray, a strong Protestant and apparently an important player in French affairs at this time. *Cecil*, 393.

⁶⁶*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 273-274.

⁶⁷Ibid., 287.

⁶⁸Ibid., 328; see also *Cecil*, 393.

⁶⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 278.

welcome and also left.⁷⁰ Norris also made sure that Cecil knew the Catholics were arming and told Cecil on July 23, that the government had appointed sixteen captains in Paris, each with 100 men, and that all of these needed to be Catholic.⁷¹ Later, the French government named captains in other areas.⁷² Norris also prepared a letter dated July 23, to the Queen informing her that the army of the King of Spain had just come to Luxembourg.⁷³ Clearly, Norris wanted to make both Cecil and Elizabeth aware of what he saw as Catholic preparations to attack the Huguenots.

By August, the King of Spain was passing through Burgundy, and the French Catholics were worried at this Spanish presence. Norris reported in a letter to his queen dated August 7, that some of the French were saying that Elizabeth had freed imprisoned Catholic Bishops in an effort to join in a league with Spain.⁷⁴ This letter indicates that although Norris was worried there would be a Catholic league against Protestants, including in those in England, the French were not actually sure of support from Spain. The Spanish army, led by the Duke of Alva, was traveling from Spain to the Netherlands and moved by land over the Eastern frontier of France to do so. The presence of foreign troops in France worsened the already volatile situation in France, and Alva's march through France in June and July of 1567 led directly to the outbreak of the second French Religious War.⁷⁵ Thus the Spanish influence in France, whether for or against French Catholics, helped precipitate the second French war of religion, giving at least some credence to Norris's contentions that foreign Catholic powers were a threat to the Huguenots.

Despite the lack of a solid alliance or even friendship between France and Spain,

⁷⁰Ibid., 305.

⁷¹Ibid., 294.

⁷²Ibid., 327, 328.

⁷³Ibid., 296.

⁷⁴Ibid., 312.

⁷⁵Holt, 63.

Norris did not give up reporting rumors of an apparently impending Catholic conspiracy. On August 23, Norris reported to Queen Elizabeth that the Catholics in France were bragging that when the Spanish forces arrived in Flanders that the French king would take the opportunity to revoke the Edict of Pacification giving protection to the Protestants.⁷⁶ According to Norris, the Catholics were complaining that the edict was being breached by Protestants, claiming that while the edict allowed Huguenot barons and high justiciars to have preaching in their houses with their household and tenants, they were allowing others to hear the preaching in their houses and had allowed preaching in unauthorized places. Catholics also proposed sending commissioners out to identify those who were violating the King's edict.⁷⁷ Norris also informed Elizabeth that the Guise family had the greatest influence at the French Court, and that the Cardinal of Lorraine⁷⁸ was planning on holding secret meetings with the King to discuss religion.⁷⁹ Norris thus believed that the Spanish presence gave the French Catholics confidence to try to limit the religious freedom of the Huguenots.

By the end of August forces were gathered and the outbreak of the second French religious war was drawing nearer. Norris continued sending reports to London favoring the Protestants and putting the blame for the growing conflict on the Catholics. Norris noted that Swiss soldiers and followers totaling 6000 were drawing nearer to Paris, which he correctly noted would "rekindle some flames of civil commotions."⁸⁰ He also told Queen Elizabeth that the Protestants were preparing themselves for war and

⁷⁶*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 327.*

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 328.

⁷⁸Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine, was a member of the Guise family, and was an influential Catholic leader against the Huguenots. Holt, 223.

⁷⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 327.*

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 330. Throughout the French wars of religion the government of France maintained links with the Catholic cantons of Switzerland through a series of military treaties. De Lamar Jensen, "French Diplomacy and the Wars of Religion." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 2 (October, 1974): 31.

were gathering money secretly.⁸¹ Norris stated that the French Queen Mother had responded to correspondence from Condé to assure him that the Swiss were there to defend the borders against Spanish invasion. She also invited Condé back to court and assured him that she would do all she could to prevent the Edict of Pacification from being revoked.⁸² However, two weeks later Norris reported to Leicester and to Cecil that the French King, while at the city of Meaux, had decided with his council to revoke the Edict of Pacification. Furthermore Norris reported that the King and his council had decided to prohibit Protestant meetings, to expel all Protestant preachers, and to reinstate the Catholic faith and mass.⁸³ Thus, according to Norris, a Catholic desire to deprive Protestants of their ability to worship was driving the parties toward war.

Norris's letters gave the impression that the Huguenots were arming simply to defend themselves, but he left out references in his letters to offensive actions by the Protestants. Norris reported that the King was at the city of Meaux waiting on Swiss soldiers to arrive to march to Paris. He stated that Condé had also assembled a force, and had responded to an envoy from the King that he had done so to defend himself from the King's imported soldiers. Further, showing his Protestant colors, Norris remarked that Condé announced he was gathering a force "to maintain the liberty of the gospel, which the King was determined to suppress."⁸⁴ Norris, however, failed to report actions by Condé against the King. At this time, the Guise family was dominating the royal council.⁸⁵ The Huguenots resented this influence and under Condé and Coligny had hatched a plot to kidnap the King at Meaux and separate him from the counsel of the Guise family, and that this plot was likely only prevented by the 6000 Swiss.⁸⁶ In

⁸¹ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 330-331.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 330.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 338-339

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 338.

⁸⁵ Holt, 63.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

fact, King Charles learned of the Huguenot plot to kidnap him and then used the 6000 Swiss troops to make his way back to Paris in safety.⁸⁷ It is appears that Norris must have known of this plot, as Englishman Richard Clough in Antwerp stated that the King had “escaped out of Meaux,” suggesting that he was in some danger there.⁸⁸ It was this abortive attempt to kidnap the French King that started the second French civil war of religion.⁸⁹ Thus, although both sides were arming for conflict, and Protestant actions in trying to kidnap the king actually precipitated the start of the second war, Norris portrayed the coming fight as one in which the Catholics were the aggressors while the Protestants were simply acting to defend themselves.

Norris continued this theme after the King had returned to Paris a couple of days later. He noted that the King had arrived in the capital with the Cardinals of Bourbon and Lorraine and the Duke of Guise, and the Huguenots in the city were aware that the articles proposed by the King’s council were shortly to be published “to the overthrow of religion,” and many Protestants were selling what they could and departing from the city.⁹⁰ Three days later Norris reported that “those of the religion sold their goods and left Paris,⁹¹ implying that most, if not all, of the Protestants in Paris had left town.⁹² Thus, in addition to failing to report that Protestant action had precipitated the fighting, Norris made sure he portrayed the Huguenots in the capital as victims of the French king’s actions.

On September 30, Norris announced to Elizabeth that civil war “so long breeding”

⁸⁷Mark Strage, *Women of Power: The Life and Times of Catherine de Medici* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 158.

⁸⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 352.

⁸⁹Stone, 120.

⁹⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 340.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 342.

⁹²Many Huguenots left Paris at the beginning of the second war of religion and did not return to the city until the end of the third war. Barbara Diefendorf, “Prologue to a Massacre: Popular Unrest in Paris, 1557-1572,” *The American Historical Review* 90, no.5 (Dec. 1985): 1085.

was “now openly declared.”⁹³ The news of this outbreak of war did not cause Queen Elizabeth to rush to aid her fellow Protestants in France. When Elizabeth learned of the outbreak of this second French religious civil war she told the French ambassador serving in England that she would not aid the rebels nor allow any aid to go to them from England. She also told the ambassador that she would offer her services as a mediator.⁹⁴ Elizabeth was apparently worried that if she helped Protestants rebels against Catholic leaders it would set a precedent and give Catholic rulers an excuse to help Catholics in her own country against her. However, most of Elizabeth’s advisors feared a Catholic league against England and believed England needed Protestant allies, including those in France. Cecil and others in the Privy Council supported aiding the Protestants but Elizabeth resisted doing so.⁹⁵ The English ambassador in France shared the view of those in the Privy Council.

Norris’s description of the beginnings of the war continued to show his preference for the Protestant cause. Norris told Elizabeth that the king had returned from Meaux with 6000 Swiss and faced a battle with 700 horsemen, but was able to make it to Paris with reinforcements, and from Paris the French king was able to command and reinforce his power. Although there was fighting by both sides, and Norris noted that the Protestants were capturing towns, Norris again characterized the Catholics as the aggressors, stating that “[g]reat are the murders which are committed against them that be known to be of the religion and daily like to be more.”⁹⁶ Norris thus continued his practice of putting most of the blame for the conflict on the Catholics.

In October, 1567, Norris reported that the Catholics and the Huguenots were trying to reach some agreement to stop the conflict, but these attempts may have exacerbated the bad feeling between the parties, and, at least on this occasion, Norris

⁹³*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 348.*

⁹⁴*Cecil, 394.*

⁹⁵*Ibid., 392-393.*

⁹⁶*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 348.*

put some of the blame on the Protestants. He noted that Condé had presented ten articles to the King, among which were an agreement to have “preaching and liberty of conscience throughout the realm,” but Norris stated that it also included a stipulation that Condé should control the government during the minority of the King. However, Norris explained that these articles had “stirred up a fire which will hardly be quenched.”⁹⁷ Subsequent events bore out Norris’s prediction. The day after the receipt of these proposals, according to Norris, Condé was involved in a skirmish and burned 17 windmills.⁹⁸ On this occasion Norris reported some of the offensive actions of the Huguenots.

Norris further reported that the French King also tried to end the conflict. Norris stated that the King sent a message to Condé that he was proclaiming that all who supported him should disarm and retreat and in doing so their lives and property would be spared, but otherwise their goods would be taken. The King also sent assurances that he would keep his edicts made for the pacification of religion, but if the Huguenots would not submit to him he would prosecute them.⁹⁹ On October 8, after consulting with his nobles, the King issued a proclamation that if Condé and his followers would submit themselves to the King within three days all would be pardoned, but if they refused, it would be lawful for all the King’s subjects to kill those they found armed. Norris reported that in response to this proclamation the peasants had armed themselves in order to defend themselves and to execute the King’s judgment.¹⁰⁰ Norris reported to Leicester that Condé and his men, apparently in response to the King’s proclamation, met on October 10 and 11 and then demanded the cities of Calais, Boulogne and Metz from the King, permission for the second church in every town to be Protestant, and, just as the King had demanded of them, they made a request to the King to disarm his

⁹⁷Ibid., 352.

⁹⁸Ibid., 352-353.

⁹⁹Ibid., 354.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

troops.¹⁰¹ Both sides wanted a “truce” which would give them the advantage, and not surprisingly, no agreement was reached and the fighting continued.

After the Prince made these requests, Norris reported that both sides added more soldiers and they were both expecting further additions.¹⁰² Norris continued his refrain that foreign Catholic powers were becoming involved. In a letter to Elizabeth dated November 2, 1567, Norris stated that the King was expecting 5000 Spaniards and 5000 more Swiss troops.¹⁰³ Spain and Switzerland were not the only foreign aid Charles expected to receive, however, according to Norris.

The French King was also expecting help from England. Norris reported that the French King had declared to Condé that Queen Elizabeth had promised to give him aid as well.¹⁰⁴ There does not appear to be any indication that Elizabeth had promised Charles any men or money, although Elizabeth’s statements to the French ambassador in England that she would not give aid to the Huguenots and would mediate the conflict might have been interpreted by Charles that Elizabeth would aid him.¹⁰⁵ Despite these statements by Elizabeth to the French representative in England Huguenots regarded Elizabeth “as their best hope in their struggle to maintain freedom of worship.”¹⁰⁶ Certainly any indication that Elizabeth would not only not send help to the Protestants but would also give aid to the Catholic side would be a large blow to the confidence of the Huguenots.

Queen Elizabeth indicated in a letter completed the next day that she was prepared to give aid to the French Catholics, instructing Norris to pledge her support to the French royal family. She told Norris to let the King, Queen Mother and council

¹⁰¹Ibid., 358.

¹⁰²Ibid., 358-359.

¹⁰³Ibid., 365.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵See *Cecil*, 394.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 392.

“plainly understand” that whatever they may need she would “be glad to show the good office of a prince and neighbour” in helping them maintain their kingdom and tranquillity in their lands. She also instructed Norris to seek redress for some wrongs committed against some of her subjects in France, but she did not express a desire to help the Protestants at this time.¹⁰⁷ Thus although Norris may have considered the Catholics as the aggressors, Elizabeth saw the outbreak of war as a rebellion by the Huguenots against the lawful authority of the King. Norris, however would attempt to assure that England had sympathy for the Huguenots, at least with the leaders other than Elizabeth, and he would have walked on Cecil’s side of the tightrope.

In a letter to the Queen dated November 16, Norris, apparently understanding the Queen’s position, gave a fairly even-handed account of the occurrences in the war, and even presented the French King as seeking for peace, although he did give some indication of the suffering of the Huguenots. He reported that the King had communicated to his bellicose subjects that the restrictions against the Huguenots would be lifted and “liberty of preaching” would be allowed in the whole of France. In addition, he promised to pay Condé 300,000 francs to allow the people to return home without harm, although this was not yet possible. Norris also gave an account of the Battle of St. Denis, and noted there were great numbers killed on both sides.¹⁰⁸ In this battle, Condé had tried to capture Paris and end the war. His army camped at St. Denis near Paris and tried to cut off supplies to the capital, but on November 10, the short battle saw the King’s army victorious.¹⁰⁹ In addition to reporting the battle, Norris also made sure that he listed non-military actions of the Catholics against a Protestant leader when he also reported that the Catholics had captured Condé’s mother-in-law and children and had taken them to the Louvre. Norris also stated that Condé sent a

¹⁰⁷ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 366.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 369-370.

¹⁰⁹ Otto Zoff, *Huguenots: Fighters for God and Human Freedom*, trans. E.B. Ashton and Jo Mayo (New York: L.B. Fischer, 1942), 116-117.

representative to the King to get him to “to cast his pitiful eyes upon his poor subjects,” but the King responded to this request that if they would submit to him he would again lovingly receive them as his subjects and forgive what had been done against him.¹¹⁰ Thus, although Norris tried to present Elizabeth with a fairly even-handed account of the Battle of St. Denis, he also included some comments designed to show the suffering of the Huguenots.

Norris continued his more even-handed accounts to the Queen, but to Cecil he expressed his sympathy to the Protestant cause. On November 24, Norris told Elizabeth that he had expressed her will to King Charles concerning her desire to help the royal family in France, and the King gave his “most hearty thanks.” He also gave details of reinforcements that had arrived for both sides.¹¹¹ On the 25th and 29th, however, Norris expressed to Cecil what he saw as the dangers for Protestants both in France and in England. He reminded Cecil that it had been rumored that the King of Spain and the Pope had stated that after the Catholics had defeated Condé and Coligny, the English were next, and Norris claimed that some were again making this boast. He also stated to Cecil that the Pope “marvelously encourage[d] the French King with money” to wage the war.¹¹² Norris recognized that the Queen would not believe such threats, telling Cecil that he should not inform Elizabeth of these matters yet, but had confidence that Cecil would know when to tell her. He also tried to justify the actions taken by the Protestants, claiming that dire threats to their religion had driven them to defend themselves. Norris informed Cecil that the Protestants were convinced that at some point the English would come to their defense, and that although the Queen had expressed her doubts about giving aid, he believed Elizabeth would at some convenient point do so. He also noted that the Huguenots were determined not to make

¹¹⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 370.*

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, 372.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, 374

peace until they had good assurances for their religious freedom and their safety.¹¹³

Norris showed in these letters that he was clearly sympathetic for the Protestant cause, and that he even believed if England did not do something to help them, not only the Huguenots, but also English Protestants would be in danger, a theme that would be repeated. He also realized that Elizabeth was not inclined to believe such a threat and had no desire at that time to aid the French Protestants. He knew that Cecil shared his sympathies and concerns, and he informed the secretary of his fears, confident that at some point Cecil could get Elizabeth to actually help the Huguenots. However, at least in the second French religious war, no official English help to the Protestants would be forthcoming.¹¹⁴

In correspondence to Cecil, Norris also portrayed the Catholics as refusing to make peace with the Protestants. Norris wrote Cecil again on December 7, and noted that since the magistrates of Paris were upset with talk of peace, the French King declared to them that he would not make an accord with the Huguenots.¹¹⁵ Thus, Norris wanted to make it clear to Cecil that the only way for the French Protestants to secure their safety and religious freedom was through force.

A little over a week later, Norris apparently decided he would try to gain the Queen's sympathy toward the Protestants and put the blame for the lack of a peace accord squarely on the shoulders of the Catholics. On December 15, Norris wrote the Queen to tell her that although the two sides had made truces three times, they had not succeeded in making a lasting peace. He claimed to Elizabeth that many of leaders of the King's army wanted revenge on the Protestants more than peace in their country. Also, the Parisians were offended at the talk of peace and had raised money and men to help the Catholic cause.¹¹⁶ Norris also noted that someone had intercepted a letter

¹¹³Ibid., 373-374.

¹¹⁴Holt, 65.

¹¹⁵*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 377.*

¹¹⁶Ibid., 379-381. Parisians had violently opposed the peace of Amboise, which ended

from the Queen Mother to the Cardinal of Lorraine stating that whatever her outward appearance, he had her promise that no peace would be made. According to Norris, the plan of the Queen Mother and presumably the King was to kill Condé and with him out of the way they could more easily deal with the rest of the Protestants. Norris told Elizabeth that the Queen Mother hoped, after killing Condé, to be able to persuade the Huguenots to give up their rebellion, or if that failed, to use force.¹¹⁷ Thus, Norris tried to make Queen Elizabeth believe that not only were the Protestant leaders not rebelling against the French government, but the royal household was attempting to kill Condé.

He also tried to get Elizabeth to believe in a wider conspiracy against Protestants. Once the Protestants in France were in control, Norris warned, the French leaders, with the help of the Pope and the King of Spain, planned to invade England. Norris went on to comment that he believed Elizabeth would act to prevent this supposed Catholic invasion of England when the time came.¹¹⁸ Norris was thus trying to convince Elizabeth that she must act at some point to help the Huguenots or England would also be in danger.

Norris went on to encourage Elizabeth to invade France, again using Calais as an incentive. He informed Elizabeth that the French were fearful of England, and there were rumors that Elizabeth was going to invade to try to claim Calais. Without directly encouraging her to do so Norris hinted that it might be a good time to invade France. He stated that while many in the King's army wanted to destroy Condé they were not united. Norris also stated that many believed that the dissension might grow stronger and Condé might receive foreign aid so action against him needed to be taken quickly.¹¹⁹ Thus Norris wanted Elizabeth to quickly act in trying to recover Calais, believing the French were unable to offer resistance at that time.

the first war of religion in 1563. Diefendorf, 1081

¹¹⁷*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 379-380.*

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, 380.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*

The same day Norris dispatched a shorter letter to Cecil importuning him for aid for the Protestant cause. He stated that he hoped to soon have messages for Cecil from the Prince and the Admiral, and Norris told Cecil that he hoped “that aid might be given before it [was] too late,” and that at the very least they could be saved from ruin and a peace made.¹²⁰ Although the Huguenots had enjoyed some success militarily, according to Norris, they were unable to defeat the King’s army without foreign support.¹²¹ In letters bearing the same date, Norris gave a much rosier account of the state of Condé and the Huguenots to Elizabeth than he did to Cecil, although he noted some of the difficulties to the Queen.¹²² With Cecil, however, Norris seemed to be stating that things were very desperate for the Huguenots and particularly for Condé, which later events would show were true.

Norris later wrote Cecil and outlined how things had turned for the worse for the Protestants, although he saw hopes for peace. He stated that on December 16, the King had published letters calling for confiscation of the Huguenots’ goods.¹²³ There were some rumors that peace was being concluded, but Norris noted that there was a difficulty in working out the manner to disarm, including payment of mercenaries.¹²⁴ Norris thought the chances for peace were good, as he told Cecil that he wished the Queen would send over a noble to work out difficulties between the French King and his nobles.¹²⁵ However, he noted in this same letter that there were still battles taking place as late as December 23.¹²⁶ Thus, although the Huguenots and Catholics were discussing peace, Norris was still reporting military battles, showing that the two sides were not quite ready for a cessation of fighting.

¹²⁰Ibid., 381.

¹²¹Holt, 65.

¹²²See *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 380-381.

¹²³Ibid., 385.

¹²⁴Ibid., 385-386.

¹²⁵Ibid., 386.

¹²⁶Ibid.

As the year 1567 drew to a close there was talk of peace, but there was still armed conflict and many did not really want peace, at least from the Catholic side, according to Norris. Moreover, although Norris had continued, since the war began in August, to press Queen Elizabeth for aid for the Protestants and to try to recover Calais, and even to send over someone to help work out difficulties between the warring parties, she refused to do so.²² Thus Norris was unsuccessful in 1567 in convincing his queen to give aid to the French Protestants.

Norris had spent his first year as ambassador watching latent hostilities between French Catholics and Protestants erupt into outright war. While Queen Elizabeth had employed Norris to try to regain the city of Calais in France for England, she refused to intervene on behalf of the Huguenots. Conyers Read, a biographer of Cecil, described Norris as walking a “tightrope” between Cecil, who desired strongly to give aid to the Huguenots, and Queen Elizabeth, who did not want to render aid to the French Protestants. Norris’s letters, however, clearly show that he was also strongly in favor of helping those “of the religion” in France.²³

Furthermore, Norris’s correspondence shows that he not only favored English aid for the Huguenots, his reporting of the conflict was strongly biased in favor of the Huguenots. For example, the second French war of religion commenced when Protestants led by Condé attempted to capture the French King.²⁴ Norris neglected to mention this attempted kidnapping, however, reporting that Condé had assembled forces and was acting to defend the Huguenots.²⁵ Norris, worried that his queen thought he was favoring the French Protestants too much, was careful in how he reported events of the war to her, but was more forthright with his opinions to Cecil, the Queen’s secretary who was strongly Protestant. Norris did strongly favor the

²²See *Cecil*, 395.

²³See *ibid.*, 364.

²⁴Holt 64.

²⁵*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 338.

Huguenots in his correspondence, often reporting events in a manner to put them in the best light. He did not give up in getting his queen to favor his fellow Protestants in France, but as his first year as ambassador came to a close, Norris was unsuccessful in gaining the desired aid.

Chapter 2

A Bellicose Peace

The second war of religion between the French Catholics, led by the French King, and the Huguenots under the Prince of Condé, continued in January, 1568. This war had begun in September of 1567, after the Huguenot leaders had unsuccessfully attempted to capture the French King in an effort to get him away from counselors adverse to their interests. The Huguenots hoped for aid from England, and the English ambassador, Sir Henry Norris, as well as members of the English Privy Council, wanted to send help, but the English sovereign, Queen Elizabeth, refused to do so. Norris would continue to seek English aid.

Norris would be unsuccessful in obtaining English aid for the Huguenots during the second French war of religion, which would lead to an unfavorable peace for the Protestants. As a result of Catholic treatment of the Protestants during this “peace,” which Norris emphasized in his letters to Elizabeth, the ambassador was able to convince his Queen that she should aid the Huguenots.

During the second war of religion the Catholic army clearly outnumbered the army of the Huguenots, but Norris still was optimistic about the Protestants’ chances. Estimates for the sizes of the armies ranged between 25,000 to 30,000 for the Huguenots and 30,000 to 40,000 for the Catholics.¹ However, Norris saw some weaknesses in the larger army of the French King, and despite the smaller Huguenot army, Norris found reasons to hope for its success.

Norris reported to Elizabeth on January 4, 1568, that King Charles was having

¹Charles Wilson, *The Transformation of Europe, 1558-1648* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), 120; Henry M. Baird, *History of the Huguenots of France*, Vol. II (New York: Ames Press, 1879, reprinted 1970), 231; Jean Heritier, *Catherine de Medici*, trans. Charlotte Haldane (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1963), 285.

problems with his army, both with a lack money and with dissension among the nobility. Some nobles did not want to fight the Huguenots because of their own religious beliefs, and some did not desire to fight because they were worried that fighting might interfere with their own ambitions. To raise money the King authorized officers to sell personal property belonging to those who followed Condé and the crown annexed real property of the Huguenots. On the other hand, Norris informed Elizabeth, the cantons of Berne and Zurich in Switzerland² had declared that they would come to the aid of the French Protestants if the King's aim was to exterminate the Protestant religion, and the Prince daily received a great company of soldiers.³ In this letter Norris seemed to give the Queen a much rosier picture of the chances for Protestant success than he had in previous dispatches.

Later on January 23, 1568, Norris wrote Elizabeth about the peace negotiations and the difficulties faced by the parties in reaching an accord, which Norris believed were mainly caused by actions of Catholics. He noted that the Queen Mother had traveled to Chalons to meet with Protestant envoys but she had to quiet dissension among her supporters. Norris also stated that It was dangerous for the Huguenot Cardinal of Châtillon,⁴ who had met with the Queen Mother at Chalons, to go to Paris because of fear of the "rage of the rude multitude."⁴ Furthermore, Norris stated that the French King had been required to announce publicly that he would not make peace, as

²In Switzerland, each canton, or city and surrounding area, was governed by a local aristocracy, rather than a territorial prince, and these canton were united in the loose Swiss confederacy, Zurich and Berne had become Protestant under the direction of reformer Ulrich Zwingli earlier in the century along with some other cantons, while many, particularly in the south, remained Catholic. Roland H. Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952, Beacon Paperbacks, 1956, 1968), 85, 90.

³*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 390.

⁴The Cardinal of Châtillon was the brother of Admiral Coligny. *Cecil*, 419. He was also Protestant, married and was an excommunicate from the Catholic Church. *Massacre*, 88.

⁴*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 401.

the Parisians, who had given the King 600,000 francs for the war, would not stand for peace negotiations, but that both he and the Queen Mother had been negotiating for peace secretly. Also, the doctors of the Sorbonne had gone to the royal court to try to convince the royal family to continue the war, fearing that the spread of the Protestant religion would lead to decay of the Catholic Church.⁵ The Parisian population was strongly Catholic in its sympathies, which would help explain Châtillon's reluctance to travel there.⁶

In this same late January letter to Elizabeth, Norris indicated that peace was likely to be forthcoming. He reported that the King was running out of funds and the war was also costly to Condé, making them more likely to seek peace. Perhaps more importantly, Norris thought peace could be achieved because the Queen Mother believed it would help her in holding on to power in the government.⁷ Thus Norris believed peace might be achieved, not because of a desire on behalf of the King and Queen Mother to accord religious rights to the Protestants, but because they were worried about money and the loss of their power.

In spite of the likelihood of peace, Norris was still worried about the influence of foreign Catholic powers. Norris noted that the representatives of the Pope and Spain were trying to prevent a peace accord, and the King of Spain had sent money to the French King to help him continue the war.⁸ Norris reported that the ambassadors of Spain and Rome had even learned of the secret negotiations for peace and, convincing Charles that two religions could not live in one kingdom without confusion, caused Charles to send word that he would no longer negotiate for peace unless Condé and his followers would send their mercenaries out of France and disarm themselves to make amends for what they had done at Meaux (trying to kidnap the King). Norris further

⁵Ibid., 401-402.

⁶*Cecil*, 417.

⁷*Cal. S.P. Foreign*, 1566-68, 401.

⁸Ibid., 401-402.

noted that the King of Spain was trying to make a peace accord with the Turks to allow him to turn his attention to what was going on in France.⁹ In this letter Norris was attempting to show Elizabeth that foreign Catholic powers were aligned against the French Protestants, apparently to try to get her to be more willing to send them aid.

Norris went on to state in this letter that agents of Catholic powers were doing more than encouraging the French King to continue the war and offering him financial assistance. He related that the Cardinal of Santa Croce, apparently a representative of the Pope, had entered the French council chamber on January 20 and announced to the Queen that he had promised the Pope that he would deliver the Protestant Cardinal of Châtillon into the Pontiff's hands, and requested the council's help in doing so. Norris noted that when the Queen Mother objected, since Châtillon had come to meet with the royal family based on a promise of safe conduct from the King and assurances from her, the Cardinal of Santa Croce claimed that since Châtillon was an excommunicate and condemned of schism, he was dead according to the law. The Queen found support in her objection from the Duc de Montmorency,¹⁰ and the Pope's agent had to leave "without attaining his most cruel request."¹¹ Norris tried to go into some detail to show what he perceived as the cruelty on the Catholic side in trying to stamp out the Protestant religion. Knowing that Elizabeth felt some attachment to the King and Queen Mother of France, however, Norris related what he perceived to be occurring against the Protestants to show the royal leaders in a relatively good light. Still he indicated that they were pushed by others inside and outside of France to continue the war against the Protestants.

⁹Ibid., 402

¹⁰François, Duc de Montmorency, was a moderate member of the French Privy Council who often quarreled with the Cardinal of Lorraine. See N.M Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980), 162, 219-220, 391.

¹¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 402.

The difficulties Norris faced in getting Elizabeth to understand what he believed to be the plight of the Huguenots is shown in a letter he addressed to Cecil on January 23. Norris asked Cecil if he could “write his mind more overtly” to him than he dared do with the Queen, claiming that he had learned that she thought he was too partial toward the Protestant Prince Condé. He specified to Cecil that the Queen believed he was too biased in reporting Condé’s successes,¹² perhaps helping to further explain why he went into such detail to list the forces arrayed against the Huguenots in his letter to Elizabeth. Norris thus was worried of appearing to favor the Huguenots in his letters to the Queen, but was more open with his preference in correspondence to Cecil.

By letter dated January 29, Norris attempted to describe to Cecil what he saw as rumors adverse to Condé and the Protestant cause. He noted that Condé wanted to dispel calumny against himself, which asserted that the Prince was prepared to injure the person of the King. Norris stated that Condé had declared that the reason he was fighting was to maintain the Edict of Pacification and to advance the cause of the French nobility, which he claimed was oppressed by strangers and “petty companions” around the King.¹³ To illustrate for Cecil the problems and dissension in the King’s camp Norris described in some detail some of the contentions between various persons surrounding King Charles. Norris also informed Cecil that the parties were once again talking about peace, with the Queen Mother somewhat at odds with the Parisians over the negotiations with the Huguenots.¹⁴ Norris again portrayed the French King and Queen Mother in a somewhat positive light, putting the blame for the conflict on those surrounding them.

In a letter to Cecil a few days later Norris had apparently forgotten about the potential peace, describing a battle near Châtillon. Also, in order to remind Cecil of the

¹²Ibid., 403.

¹³Ibid., 406.

¹⁴Ibid., 406-407.

importance of foreign aid to the Huguenots, Norris reported in this letter that the Prince's army, which had just crossed the Seine, was not inferior to that of the King, but claimed that Condé would have difficulty in battle because of the Swiss soldiers fighting for the Catholic cause.¹⁵ Norris wanted to show that the Huguenot army had a chance at success, but also underscored what he saw as a need for aid to the Protestants.

Norris continued to hope for English involvement in France. Norris wrote Cecil on February 6, to report that Catholics in Scotland had written to tell the French King that England and Scotland had conspired together to request help in freeing Queen Mary, and were also planning on sending aid to Condé.¹⁶ In a letter a week later, Norris told Cecil that he hoped this would come to pass, for then previous losses would more easily be recovered,¹⁷ apparently hoping that the English could once again attempt to take Calais. Also, fearing that England might invade, the French government had requested the Governor of Calais to stock the town up on food.¹⁸ Norris seemed hopeful that rumors he was hearing about possible English intervention in France were true.

On February 9, Norris complained to Cecil about the delays in the peace efforts. He once again urged the English to make a demand for Calais. However, he apparently did not think the English would be any more successful at regaining Calais than they had been the previous year, but Norris believed that an English attempt at Calais might help broker a peace between the French King and the Protestants and that otherwise Condé and Coligny might be ruined.¹⁹ Thus Norris was searching for some way to help obtain a peace favorable to the Protestants, and believed that a desire for Calais might convince Elizabeth to intervene in France.

¹⁵Ibid., 409.

¹⁶Ibid., 410-411.

¹⁷Ibid., 415.

¹⁸Ibid., 410-411.

¹⁹Ibid., 413.

The parties would not soon conclude peace, as Norris indicated to Elizabeth on February 6, describing fierce fighting among the parties. Although he noted to the Queen that the King of France was having trouble getting the soldiers he wanted and had to sell offices to raise money, Norris's description of the conflict to Elizabeth, mindful of the Queen's belief that he favored the Protestants, did not give a decided advantage to either party.²⁰ In a letter to Cecil the same day, however, Norris stated that Condé was so powerful that he could go where he wanted in France, unless greater foreign powers arrived, since the King's forces were hesitant to fight against their countrymen and were returning home.²¹ Norris was still favoring the Protestants, as shown in his letter to Cecil, but was still afraid to show this favoritism to Elizabeth.

Later in the month, Norris again sent letters to Elizabeth and Cecil on the same day, February 24, but reported things a little differently to the Queen and to the Secretary. He reported the results of various military maneuvers to both, as well as the Queen Mother's need to take bodyguards with her for fear of the Parisians who resented her efforts at peace.²² However, to Cecil, Norris added extra comments about helping the Protestants in France. He reported that Coligny and Condé, knowing that Cecil was a faithful friend of the Huguenots, had requested, based on this friendship, that Cecil ask Elizabeth to send money to help pay German mercenaries who otherwise might soon leave.²³ Although he was hesitant to show favoritism to Elizabeth, Norris continued to push for English aid to the Huguenots in his letters to Cecil.

By the beginning of March, Norris was once again daring to show some favoritism toward the Protestants in correspondence to the Queen. He noted in a letter to Elizabeth in early March that Condé and his forces had sent letters to Paris to request an immediate end to the conflict. In these letters Condé claimed that if the Huguenots

²⁰Ibid., 414.

²¹Ibid., 415.

²²Ibid., 418-419.

²³Ibid., 419.

were given liberty of conscience the war could be ended, and he claimed that they were fighting only because they were fearful for their lives. Also, Norris told Elizabeth that in peace negotiations the Prince had requested that all the agreements for the protection of the Protestants be upheld. However, Norris complained that supporters of the King had requested that Condé and his followers give up their arms simply on the King's request without any assurances regarding religious liberty.²⁴ Norris thus portrayed the Catholics as the aggressors, with the Protestants simply acting to defend their religion, ignoring the fact that many Catholics were also fighting for religious reasons.

Norris also portrayed the Catholics as being aggressive toward other Catholics. In this letter to Elizabeth and another one dated March 1, to Cecil, Norris complained that mercenaries hired by the King had killed priests at Mass and had burned and broken images, which caused them to be disliked by the Parisians. Norris also told Elizabeth that the Queen Mother still needed a bodyguard because of her distrust of the Parisians, who were angry that she had entertained peace negotiations.²⁵ Thus, to Norris, those on the side of the French Catholics were likely to harm one another.

Despite Norris's attempts to convince Elizabeth that she should aid the Protestants, no such aid was forthcoming from Elizabeth or other allies. The French Protestants made several attempts to obtain aid from both Elizabeth and German princes, but failed to procure the needed support.²⁶ This lack of support would lead to a peace unfavorable to the Huguenots, as will be seen.

After several failed attempts at peace, on March 4, 1568, the Prince sent articles

²⁴Ibid., 422.

²⁵Ibid., 423-424.

²⁶Holt, 65. A biographer of Cecil, later known as Lord Burghley, states that the second war of religion ended before Cecil could persuade Elizabeth to ally herself with the Huguenots. B.W. Beckingsale, *Burghley: Tudor Statesman, 1520-1598* (London: Macmillan and Company Limited; New York: St. Martin's Press Inc., 1967), 115. Certainly Norris and members of the Privy Council tried unsuccessfully to get Elizabeth to support the Huguenots during the second war as well. See *ibid.*

of Peace to the French King, and he accepted most of them.²⁷ The Peace of Longjumeau, which was formally concluded on March 23, 1568, ended the second French war of religion. The hardships of winter, the lack of necessities and of money had led the parties to conclude the peace.²⁸ The change from war to “peace” would not be easy, however.

Norris wrote Cecil on March 9, that he thought peace was concluded, but noted that there were problems dismissing soldiers who were staying for more pay.²⁹ Norris stated to Cecil two days later that there was a hesitancy to disarm on the part of the Protestants until the King’s *reiters*, or mercenaries, were disarmed,³⁰ as some of these soldiers were staying to receive promised payments.³¹ Norris also stated that there were still some problems in finalizing the peace, as the Cardinal of Lorraine was accusing the French King of condescending to make any peace with his subjects. While these discussions were taking place, Norris reported to Cecil that the *reiters* of the King were continuing to ravage the countryside.³² To Norris the Catholics were still trying to wage war even as peace was being negotiated.

On March 19, Norris reported to Elizabeth that the parties had established peace. Norris told his Queen that he had met with King Charles and the Queen Mother to give them the well wishes of the English Queen. He also informed the French royal family that Queen Elizabeth wanted to send a special envoy to give them her advice and “to recover universally the due obedience of [the King’s] subjects unto him.”³³ Elizabeth’s statement that she wanted to help assure the obedience of all French subjects to their

²⁷ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 425.*

²⁸ Michel Pernot, *Les Guerres de Religion en France: 1559-1598* (Paris: Sedes, 1987), 71-72.

²⁹ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 426.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 427.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 426.

³² *Ibid.*, 427.

³³ *Ibid.*, 431, 432.

leaders, appears more like the Catholic characterization of the conflict, which held that the Huguenots were rebelling against legitimate authority, rather than the rhetoric from the Huguenots that they were not rebelling against the King but were only fighting for their religion. Norris likely did not agree with this interpretation, but apparently related the wishes of his Queen.

However, the French King and Queen Mother told Norris they did not need the proffered help, since peace had been established and was in good standing. Norris also reported to Elizabeth that he had not told the French leaders her instructions “touching the indifference of the parties,” as “none here doubt[ed] of the equity in matters of religion of those who are gone to Longjumeau”³⁴ Apparently Elizabeth wanted Norris to tell the King and Queen Mother that she did not favor one side or religion in these matters, but the French royal leaders believed the terms of the agreement were equitable and Norris did not think Elizabeth’s statement of neutrality would be beneficial. Norris, despite his bias on behalf of the Protestants, apparently did not let this favoritism affect his statements on behalf of his Queen as ambassador, but related them as directed.

In a letter to Cecil the same day Norris reported a little different version of events of his meeting with the King and Queen Mother. Norris related to Cecil that Catherine de Medici had told him that there was no one who believed in punishing the disobedience of subjects more than her. Norris likely told Cecil of this event to hint that there might be some repercussions for some of the Protestants despite the peace. Catherine also asked Norris what he thought of those who had attempted to capture the King at Meaux. Norris responded that he would be glad if those who had made the attempt on the King had satisfied the Queen Mother regarding that incident.³⁵ Norris hoped that the peace had settled all aspects of the fighting, including the Huguenot

³⁴Ibid., 432.

³⁵Ibid., 432.

leaders' attempt to kidnap the King and that there would be no further action against them. Clearly, however, at least in Norris's eyes, Catherine was not completely satisfied that those who had made an attempt against her son had been adequately punished.

Catherine, despite agreeing to the peace, was not satisfied, and she was not ready to end the conflict. The surprise attack at Meaux directed against her son that had started the second religious war "had filled the Queen Mother with a strong desire to avenge herself on the Huguenots,"³⁶ and she clearly had not been satisfied by the Peace of Longjumeau, as hinted at in Norris's letter. In fact, the *Surprise de Meaux* had "marked a turning point in Catherine's relation with the Huguenots," and after that she abandoned efforts to make peace with the French Protestants, and backed efforts to defeat them.³⁷ The peace of Longjumeau did not end the efforts of Catherine and others to defeat the Huguenots.

On March 28, Norris wrote Cecil about the peace that had been concluded, but he believed there were apparently still some problems to be worked out. Norris reported that the King, the Queen Mother and the Cardinals of Bourbon, Lorraine, and Guise, in order to determine the reaction of the population of Paris to the peace treaty, had carried rods with a guilt band representing peace. In addition to the problems with the people of Paris, the French Catholics still had to raise money to get the mercenaries out of the country. Norris found, moreover, that peace had not ended the threat against the Huguenots. Norris stated to Cecil in this letter that the day after the French King signed the articles of peace some French Catholics began to make preparations to send troops to deliver the Queen of Scotland and to restore the Catholic religion in England's Northern neighbor.³⁸ Thus, despite the peace, Norris continued to see threats to the

³⁶Heritier, 277.

³⁷R. J. Knecht, "Catherine de Medici and the French Wars of Religion," *Historian* 62 (1999): 20.

³⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 434.

Huguenots and to the English from French Catholics.

Furthermore, even though Elizabeth had not decided to send aid to the Huguenots they had benefited from Protestant England, according to Norris. He told Cecil that there were two reasons peace had been concluded: one was that Condé had received reinforcements; the second was the French Catholics' fear of Queen Elizabeth, as they believed she was ready to invade using the English Navy.³⁹ Norris therefore believed that England had helped the Protestants just by a threat to come to their aid.

The peace was not to be of much benefit to the Protestants, however. N.M.. Sutherland has called the Peace of Longjumeau "a protestant error and a catholic manoeuvre."⁴⁰ No one regarded the peace as a permanent end to the religious conflict.⁴¹ For the Protestants it was not to be a tranquil peace.

Shortly after the peace was concluded Norris was writing to tell Cecil and Elizabeth that the peace was basically a sham. Norris stated to Cecil on March 30, that the peace was on shaky ground, and reported that there was a meeting of the French Privy Council, where only those opposed to the Protestants were admitted. Those at the meeting, according to Norris, were planning, once Condé and his forces had disarmed, to continue to attack the Huguenots. Norris did note, however, that some among the Catholic forces were opposed to this idea. Norris stated that Montmorency, when he learned of the conspiracy, opposed the idea, and the King denied any knowledge of the plan.⁴² Norris commented more on the dispute in the French Privy Council in a letter to Elizabeth on May 12. Norris reported that Montmorency had stated that there was nothing further necessary for the maintenance of the King's estate than the observation of the Edict of Pacification. However, the Cardinal of Lorraine opposed

³⁹J.H.M. Salmon, *Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), 172.

⁴⁰*Massacre*, 62.

⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁴²*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 436.

Montmorency in these comments, and Norris noted that there was a “mortal hatred” between the house of Montmorency and the house of Guise, of which the Cardinal of Lorraine was a member.⁴³ Although this conspiracy was supposed to be secret, the secrecy was not well kept, as the Protestant Cardinal de Châtillon had learned of it by the next morning.⁴⁴ Thus, in Norris’s eyes, and confirmed in other sources, many Catholic leaders were intent on continuing the fight against the Huguenots despite the peace.

Norris continued his theme that the peace was only a ruse by many Catholics to get the Huguenots to disarm and thus become more vulnerable. He told Cecil on May 12 that there were soldiers of the King in *Ile de France* (the region surrounding Paris) who were simply waiting till “the corn be off the ground,” to once again attack the Protestants.⁴⁵ Norris stated in his letter dated May 31 to Cecil that although hostility to the peace seemed buried, there was jealousy and “hidden hatred” among the nobility that was breeding discontent. Norris also accused the Queen Mother of agreeing to the peace to cause the Protestants to be divided and return to their homes where they would more easily be defeated.⁴⁶ The Queen Mother had apparently been responsible for the peace, imposing it on both Catholics and Protestants. For her the important thing was that the peace allowed the King’s forces to remain, while the Protestant forces were dismissed.⁴⁷ Norris told Elizabeth on July 14, that the Protestants had found a secret communication from Catherine, written before the peace was concluded, stating that the peace would not be observed longer than six months, that the King would remain armed, that Protestants would lose their offices and that the leaders of the

⁴³Ibid., 453-454.

⁴⁴Massacre, 64.

⁴⁵Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 455.

⁴⁶Ibid., 469-470.

⁴⁷Heritier, 271.

Huguenots would be executed.⁴⁸ A Catholic resident of Paris, Estienne Pasquier, who was no friend to the Huguenots,⁴⁹ reported that after the publication of peace the Huguenots had disbanded their forces and returned home while the King had not dispersed his army and had even placed garrisons on all the bridges and passages.⁵⁰ Even if there were no outright hostilities, Norris found that there was opposition to the peace, and asserted that the Queen Mother was still intent on fighting against the Huguenots.⁵¹

According to Norris, not only were the Catholics planning to resume the war, but there were still abuses against the Huguenots taking place. In a letter on April 8 to Elizabeth, Norris stated that after the proclamation of the Edict of Pacification magistrates and other Catholics at Rouen and Bourges spoiled and killed many Huguenots.⁵² On April 18, Norris reported to Cecil that soldiers at Orleans had murdered Protestants entering in at the gates, without any punishment of the perpetrators. Norris also stated that there were “[c]ommotions and slaughters” in Languedoc.⁵³ He gave Cecil more detail on this issue later, stating on May 31 that the governor had caused three captains of the religion to be killed.⁵⁴ Further, Norris stated that at Toulouse, no one would receive the Edict of Pacification, and residents of

⁴⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 501.*

⁴⁹See Estienne Pasquier to Monsieur de Querquifinen, Seigneur d’Ardivilliers, 1569, reprinted in Estienne Pasquier, *Lettres Historiques pour les Années 1556-1594*, ed. D. Thickett (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1966), 193, where Pasquier stated that he would rather die than become a Huguenot.

⁵⁰Estienne Pasquier to Monsieur de Querquifinen, Seigneur d’Ardivilliers, 1568, reprinted in *Lettres Historiques*, 184.

⁵¹N.M. Sutherland has disagreed with Heritier and Norris that the Queen was wanting to continue the fight against the Huguenots, instead placing the blame on the Cardinal of Lorraine. See *Huguenot Struggle*, 159-169. While Norris did place a lot of the blame for the continued campaign against Lorraine, as noted subsequently, he did not absolve the Queen Mother and the French King.

⁵²*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 440.*

⁵³*Ibid.*, 444.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 470.

Toulouse had killed the person who brought it to that city, using some other matter as a pretense.⁵⁵ As a result of the persecutions, according to Norris, Protestants were watching their homes by night, as Catholics were searching Protestant houses in “the inquisition of their faith”⁵⁶ Also, Norris noted that many Huguenots who lived in towns, “understanding with what cruelty the Protestants were being used,” did not return home but stayed in the fields in military organizations with captains leading them.⁵⁷ Norris did not mention that this may have actually played into the plans of Lorraine, who wanted the Protestants to be forced into abandoning their homes to soldiers or other Catholics.⁵⁸ As he had done before the start of the second religious war, Norris placed the blame for the conflict on the Catholics. Even though many Protestants were keeping themselves armed and ready for battle, and Norris noted that there were disorders committed on both sides,⁵⁹ he did not place any blame on the Protestants for actions they undertook, but justified them as necessary in light of the Catholic aggressions.

In June 1568, Condé complained to the French King about the mistreatment of the Huguenots,⁶⁰ but according to Norris, the King was not likely to help. Norris reported that Condé was unable to stay in one place, but sent a representative to the King to request that he require his subjects to allow the Protestants to return home in peace.⁶¹ However, according to Norris, the King would not help the Huguenots. He was planning on kicking out of his household any of the Protestant religion.⁶² Charles

⁵⁵Ibid., 481.

⁵⁶Ibid., 458.

⁵⁷Ibid., 474

⁵⁸*Massacre*, 64-65.

⁵⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 501.

⁶⁰See *ibid.*, 494. Under the terms of the peace, the Huguenots were supposed to be under the protection of the French King. See “Paix de Longjumeau,” 23 March, 1568, reprinted in André Stegman, ed., *Édits des Guerres de Religion* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1979), 54.

⁶¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 464

⁶²*Ibid.*, 444.

was also requiring many nobles at court to limit members of their retinue to those of the Catholic faith.⁶³ Furthermore, Norris reported to Cecil on May 31, that the French King had sent dispatches to the governors of provinces to prevent any assemblies by the Protestants.⁶⁴ In July, Norris reported to Elizabeth that in the Parliament house everyone had to express their beliefs and the King's readers at the University of Paris were also required to do so.⁶⁵ Although the Edict of Pacification had been published in Lyon on May 13, Norris reported that the next day a courier arrived from the King with instructions to forbid any exercise of the Protestant religion in the city.⁶⁶ He stated to Elizabeth in early June that after the peace had been proclaimed that the King sent letters throughout the country to require the disarming of the Protestants before they entered the towns.⁶⁷ Thus, according to Norris, the King was not going to enforce the new peace, or would do so only insofar as the Huguenots were to be disarmed, but he was intent on persecuting the Huguenots.

According to Norris, Condé did not blame the King directly for the troubles, but instead believed the cause of the continued persecutions was the Cardinal of Lorraine. Condé had written the King that as long as the Cardinal of Lorraine was near the King there would never be peace.⁶⁸ One historian, N. M. Sutherland, has found that the Cardinal of Lorraine "was able to mount a nationwide campaign of harassment and violence against the protestants," despite the wishes by the French crown to enforce the edicts of pacification.⁶⁹ Moreover, according to Norris, the marshals in France were also opposed to the power wielded by the Cardinal of Lorraine.⁷⁰ When the Cardinal of

⁶³Ibid., 458.

⁶⁴Ibid., 470.

⁶⁵Ibid., 501.

⁶⁶Ibid., 472.

⁶⁷Ibid., 474.

⁶⁸Ibid., 469-470.

⁶⁹*Massacre*, 76.

⁷⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 472.

Lorraine had tried to write letters to Condé claiming to seek reconciliation, the Prince blamed him for the lack of peace, calling him an enemy of God, and stated that he would not be reconciled until Lorraine left the country.⁷¹ Thus, Condé, unlike Norris, who believed the King and Queen Mother were partially at fault, put nearly all of the blame for the continued troubles on Lorraine.

In Norris's eyes, most Catholics had no intention of actually making peace with the Protestants, and were only using the peace as a ruse to better defeat the Huguenots. In fact, Norris found that Catholics were still, in spite of the peace, attacking and murdering Protestants, and that the French King was trying to prevent the Huguenots from exercising their religion. While the peace may have appeared on the surface to benefit the Protestants, it allowed the King to keep his regular troops and his mercenaries while the Protestant side disarmed.⁷² The Cardinal of Lorraine had apparently planned that the King would keep his forces armed and to keep persons of trust in charge of the towns, and Lorraine also wanted loyal garrisons to stay in the towns they had occupied during the war, with instructions to persecute, tax and burden the Protestants with all sorts of charges.⁷³ While Norris did favor the Protestants in his correspondence, and tended to emphasize excesses of the Catholics against the Protestants, though sometimes ignoring offensive actions by the Huguenots, he was correct in finding that the peace was much more beneficial to the Catholics than the Protestants.

The Cardinal of Lorraine sought on several occasions to assert his power and use it against the Huguenots. In April, 1568, the Queen Mother had become very ill.⁷⁴ Lorraine used Catherine's illness to further his plans against the Huguenots.⁷⁵ In May,

⁷¹Ibid., 474.

⁷²Pernot, 72.

⁷³Massacre, 64.

⁷⁴Ibid., 65.

⁷⁵Huguenot Struggle, 160.

Lorraine called a council where the members determined to kill the leaders of the Protestant religion. The council also appointed deputies to carry out the killings. Although the group did not immediately carry out their plans,⁷⁶ the meeting of the council would tend to validate to a certain extent Norris's contentions that the Catholic leaders were intent on persecuting the Huguenot leaders despite the peace.

While the peace was being proclaimed, but not actually being enforced, according to Norris, another event was occurring that would make England and France both more interested in what was going on in the other countries. Mary, the Queen of Scotland, who had been defeated and captured by rebels, had escaped from her imprisonment in Scotland and made her way to England. Previously, while in Scotland, Mary's claim to the English throne had not posed much of a threat. However, once she came to England in May, 1568, Mary became more dangerous "as the focus of internal disaffection . . . and external intervention."⁷⁷ Norris was made aware of these events, and was used as a messenger between the royal leaders in England and France with their concerns about Mary.

The news of Mary's escape from Scotland reached Norris quickly. On May 16, Queen Elizabeth wrote Norris to inform him that Mary had escaped from Lochleven, where she was being held, and made her way to the castle of Hamilton, apparently still in Scotland.⁷⁸ The news also made it to France through unofficial means. By May 17, one day after the Queen sent news to Norris that Mary had escaped, and obviously before Norris would have received that letter, Norris wrote Cecil to tell him that news of Mary's escape had caused a commotion with expectations of how this might affect the situation in France. Norris postulated that Mary's escape might cause the Cardinal of Lorraine to be more lenient toward the Protestants in hope of gathering more forces to

⁷⁶*Massacre*, 65.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 69.

⁷⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 458.

help her.⁷⁹ By May 20, Norris reported that some among the French had agreed to send a ship to Scotland with artillery, munitions and money.⁸⁰ Mary's escape caused concern both in France and England.

Elizabeth was certainly worried about what the French might do regarding Mary. She sent word to Norris on May 23, in a letter written in Cecil's hand, to let him know that Mary had come into England on May 17. Elizabeth requested that Norris tell the French King that Mary was in England, and that Elizabeth had sent people and the means to make sure Mary had all things necessary for her safety and would try to assure she was reconciled to her subjects. In telling the King this Elizabeth made sure that Norris also told the French Monarch that he should not send any force into Scotland.⁸¹ On May 31, Norris reported that he had learned that the Queen Mother had authorized money to be used to give gifts in an attempt to rescue Mary, and added that there was no greater friend to the French than the Queen of Scots.⁸² Although Elizabeth promised to send aid to Mary, and in fact did so, the threat of the French becoming involved was something the English would try to avoid. Norris, just as he had reported that Catholics would attempt to come into England for religious reasons, to stamp out Protestantism, reported rumors that the French would come onto the Island to rescue Mary.

Also, the English did not want Mary going to France. Norris wrote Cecil to state that the Queen Mother hoped that Elizabeth was treating Mary well. He also told Cecil that he should counsel the Queen to keep Mary from coming to France.⁸³ However, by June 17, the French apparently came to believe that Elizabeth was detaining Mary.⁸⁴

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Ibid., 464.

⁸¹Ibid., 466.

⁸²Ibid., 471.

⁸³Ibid., 475

⁸⁴Ibid., 481.

On June 28, Norris reported to Cecil that there were some among the French, perhaps with the help of some Spanish, who were planning on invading England to rescue the Scottish Queen, and that there were reports that there was an English Lord that would help deliver the Scottish Queen and allow her to go to France.⁸⁵ He later repeated the warning of a possible French invasion of England to bring Mary into France, but added that while there were some who were requesting help from the French King to try to bring Mary to France, King Charles refused to do so, as he had promised Elizabeth not to try to send any forces to England.⁸⁶ Thus, as Norris had worried about Catholics coming into England before, he believed that there was an intent to invade England, this time for the liberation of Mary rather than on solely religious grounds. However, with the French King refusing to send forces into England, it would make it less likely that Elizabeth would want to send forces into France.

On July 14, Norris wrote Elizabeth that the Cardinal of Lorraine was corresponding with people in England who were disposed to cause an insurrection there. Specifically, Norris believed that they would help deliver the Queen of Scots, and that there were also Italians and Spanish that would help in this endeavor.⁸⁷ On July 14, Norris told Cecil that he had confirmation of the conspiracy, and feared that the Scottish queen would shortly cause some worry in England.⁸⁸ Norris had apparently learned of this correspondence through the Cardinal of Châtillon, who had sent a friend of Coligny by the name of Menillie to warn Norris that Lorraine was often receiving letters from people in England who were predisposed to make an insurrection. Sometimes, according to Châtillon's envoy, Lorraine received these letters via Rome and sometimes through the Duke of Alva, which explains why Norris stated that Lorraine

⁸⁵Ibid., 489-490.

⁸⁶Ibid., 494.

⁸⁷Ibid., 500.

⁸⁸Ibid., 502.

had help from Italians and Spaniards.⁸⁹ Norris believed, apparently with some reason, that Lorraine was prepared, with the help of Spaniards and Italians, to go into England to help Mary.

Despite the warnings Norris had received, he later came to believe that Lorraine had not been planning to invade England with the help of Italians and Spaniards, and that the rumors to that effect were false. Norris told Cecil on July 23, that the rumor of the conspiracy had been invented to trouble Elizabeth and England.⁹⁰ However, Norris was still worried there would be some attempt to rescue Mary in England, writing Cecil on July 29, to warn him that he should keep Queen Mary safe and to be wary of Catholic plots in England.⁹¹ Elizabeth was also worried about possible conspiracies coming to England to liberate the Scottish Queen, and Cecil wrote to Norris that Elizabeth wanted to know more about what preparations were being made in France to become involved in Scottish affairs.⁹² Norris reported to Cecil on August 14, that he would go to the French King and the Queen Mother to request that they keep their promise not to send any forces into Scotland. Norris later reported that the Queen Mother had told him she did not know of any preparations to send forces into Scotland.⁹³ Despite the Queen Mother's denials, Norris was still worried, and reported to Cecil on August 14, that there were people bragging that the Scottish Queen had more friends in England than in Scotland or France, and he also stated that there were still those in France who were preparing to send forces to help Mary.⁹⁴ On August 27, Norris apparently learned of more details regarding possible aid from people in France to Mary. He reported to Elizabeth that a Duke of Châtelherault, with the blessing of the

⁸⁹ *Massacre*, 71.

⁹⁰ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 505.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 508.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 512.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 521-522.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 522.

Queen Mother, was raising a force to go into Scotland to aid the party of the Queen of Scots.⁹⁵ Thus, even though Norris came to believe that one particular rumor regarding a planned invasion to England to help Queen Mary was false, he still believed there was still a danger of a French incursion into England in support of the Scottish Queen.

Norris returned to writing about what he saw as the sad state of the Protestants in France. In a letter to Cecil dated July 29, Norris complained about the perilous state of the Huguenots and claimed that they had been required to make peace because they no longer had the financial means to wage war. He went on to complain that the King's forces were armed while those of Condé were scattered and without arms. Further, the King's forces were allowing false rumors to be spread against the Protestants, which caused other French citizens to commit outrages against them. Also, the King controlled all of the principal towns except Rochelle.⁹⁶ Apparently the King wanted that stronghold as well. On August 5, Norris reported that the King's forces were levying soldiers to besiege the last Protestant stronghold, Rochelle,⁹⁷ although by August 27, the King had abandoned plans to go against the town.⁹⁸ In these letters Norris was beginning to describe events that would lead to the start of the third religious war.

Norris also noted that the Protestants were preparing themselves for war, putting the blame on the situation he believed the Catholics had created for the Protestants, and he wanted English help for the Huguenots. In fact, Norris wrote the Duke of Norfolk⁹⁹ in July, that the Protestants were required to keep themselves armed, which Norris reported made many believe that the troubles would soon be renewed.¹⁰⁰ Also, Norris found in a letter to the Queen dated August 7, that the Protestants were worse off

⁹⁵Ibid., 532.

⁹⁶Ibid., 508.

⁹⁷Ibid., 512.

⁹⁸Ibid., 532.

⁹⁹Thomas Howard, the fourth Duke of Norfolk, was by birth the first soldier-noble of England. Wernham, 251, 440.

¹⁰⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 511.

after the peace than before, and more had been murdered since the agreement for peace than before.¹⁰¹ Because of these atrocities committed against the Protestants, Norris wanted Elizabeth to intervene. He believed that the Cardinal of Lorraine would cause more problems unless someone could stop him, told Elizabeth that Condé and Coligny were sending a representative to her, and reminded her that she was the greatest monarch among the Protestants and the “defender of the faith.”¹⁰² He also stated to Cecil that helping the French Protestants would be the best way to prevent French incursions into England to help Mary.¹⁰³ Thus Norris was once again trying to get Elizabeth involved in the Protestant-Catholic conflict in France. He further told Cecil that because of the cruelty with which the Catholics were treating the Protestants and because the Cardinal of Lorraine was planning on spreading the persecutions to the Protestant nobility, the Huguenots would shortly be forced to take up arms to protect themselves.¹⁰⁴ Norris saw the coming war, but depicted the Catholics as the aggressors while the Protestants would take up arms simply in defense of their lives and religion, and he also believed it was important that the English give them some aid.

Although Queen Elizabeth had not sent aid to the Protestants during the second French religious war, and she had even sent word of support to the French royal family both during and after the war, Elizabeth was now coming to believe that there were atrocities being committed against the Huguenots. Possibly with the assistance of the Cardinal of Châtillon, Elizabeth wanted to declare that she would now intervene on behalf of the Huguenots.¹⁰⁵ She wrote Norris, through Cecil’s hand, on August 27, 1568, commanding him to declare to the French King that she had been informed of the mistreatment against those of the religion in France because the Edict of Pacification

¹⁰¹Ibid., 515-516.

¹⁰²Ibid., 516.

¹⁰³Ibid., 522.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 516.

¹⁰⁵*Huguenot Struggle*, 168.

was not being observed. Elizabeth instructed Norris to tell the King that he should send trusted servants to investigate, and stated that he would find that the country had become more desolate in the six months since the Edict of Pacification than it was before in 18 months due to civil or foreign war.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Norris's letters were apparently having an affect on Elizabeth, and she was starting to seem more favorable toward the Protestant cause, even pleading with the French King for better treatment of the Protestants, although she had not yet mentioned anything specific about sending aid.

Norris had seen the second war of religion in France come to an end without being able to convince Elizabeth to give support to the Huguenots, and the French Protestants had entered into a peace which was unfavorable to their interests. In this "peace" the Huguenots perhaps suffered worse than they had during the second war of religion, since the Protestant forces had dispersed somewhat and had left the Huguenots more vulnerable to attack. Norris's reporting of the treatment received by the Huguenots during this "peace" helped convince Elizabeth to begin to show some support for the Protestants in France. R.B. Wernham, in his book outlining much of English foreign policy during this period, *Before the Armada: The Emergence of the English Nation, 1485-1588*, attributed Elizabeth's change of heart toward the religious conflict in France to her excommunication from the Catholic Church in 1570.¹⁰⁷ Elizabeth's change to a willingness to aid the Huguenots came earlier, however, in 1568, thanks in large part due to Norris's correspondence following the peace of Longjumeau. D.J.B Trim, in an article about English aid sent to the Huguenots from 1562 to 1577, recognizes the fact that England was sending aid the to French Protestants in 1568, and details the form of much of that aid.¹⁰⁸ Trim does not, however, recognize that this aid was lacking in the second war of religion, nor

¹⁰⁶Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 532-533.

¹⁰⁷Wernham 306.

¹⁰⁸Trim, 189-197.

Elizabeth's change of heart about aiding the Protestants and Norris's role in that change. Clearly Norris played a large role in convincing Queen Elizabeth to aid the Huguenots in 1568.

Chapter 3

A Personal War

During the second French war of religion, which lasted from September, 1567 to March, 1568, Queen Elizabeth had been reluctant to give aid to the Huguenots in France. Members of her Privy Council and her ambassador in France, Henry Norris, had unsuccessfully encouraged her to give aid to the French Protestants. However, after the peace ending the second war, the Peace of Longjumeau, Huguenots continued to complain of mistreatment at the hands of the French Catholics. The English ambassador in Paris, Henry Norris, continued to try to persuade Elizabeth to support her fellow Protestants in France, reporting to her the problems facing the Huguenots, and she began to be more willing to give aid to the French Protestants.

Norris also would become more involved in the diplomacy of the war. When he reported to the French royal family Elizabeth's concerns for the treatment of the Huguenots, they sent a representative to Elizabeth to ascertain if Norris was really conveying her wishes and the Queen strongly supported her ambassador in France. Also, Norris began to feel mistreated by the French authorities because of his support for the Huguenots, and even asked to be recalled to England, but he would stay for another two years.

Other events were also playing a role in getting the Queen more interested in affairs in France. The French connection to the events in the Netherlands, where the Protestants were rebelling against Spanish Catholic rule, Spanish threats against England, and the chance that a France dominated by Lorraine could be persuaded to become an enemy against England, as it had been in the past, all played a role in convincing Elizabeth she should become involved in events in France. From this point forward, Elizabeth would be more interested in the civil wars in France.¹ While the

¹*Massacre*, 68.

threats to England were certainly a part of Elizabeth's decision to get more involved in the French civil wars, she was also obviously swayed by reports from Norris. Norris not only had repeatedly told the Queen that what he saw as Catholic aggression might someday spread to England, but he also continually expressed concern for the fate of the Huguenots themselves. Elizabeth's correspondence showed she was beginning to share his views, since she had Norris go to the French King to express concern for the condition of the Huguenots.

Also, the English Privy Council encouraged support for the Huguenots, particularly Cecil, whom one biographer, B.W. Beckingsale, states had "drawn the Queen to the edge of open war of behalf of the Huguenots," by the end of 1568.² Certainly Cecil played a large role in getting Elizabeth to favor the Huguenots, but correspondence from Norris to both Cecil and Elizabeth putting a spin of the conflict favorable to the French Protestants certainly made Cecil's task easier.

Norris continued to list aggressions and planned aggressions by the Catholics against the Protestants, and was still hoping for English aid, even trying to use the English desire for Calais as a means to get English forces on French soil. Norris reported on August 27, to Cecil that he had somehow obtained a secret letter from the French King, of which only 200 were being sent to various places in France, which according to Norris, betrayed "the cruel meaning of the leaders of this Court toward the Prince and the whole [Protestant] religion," although he did not give any specifics of what the letter stated.³ Norris wrote Cecil again on August 29, that the time for demanding Calais would never again be as good. He indicated that his desire for an attempt at Calais was intertwined with his desire for aid for the Protestants, stating in this letter that the Protestant religion was facing danger, and that without help from England the religion could be ruined, and that then there would be great peril in England

²Beckingsale, 115.

³*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 533.*

as well.⁴ On September 2, 1568, Norris told Cecil that he trusted he would not miss this opportunity to recover Calais.⁵ Thus Norris combined an English desire to recover continental land with his desire to have English aid to the Huguenots, using the promise of Calais, which he knew Elizabeth would want, as an incentive to get her to intervene in France.

Norris also wrote Elizabeth on August 29, to inform her of events that appeared to lead to upcoming war, and to remind her of what he believed were cruelties against the Huguenots. He noted that the Prince of Condé and Admiral Coligny, the Huguenot leaders, were making their way to Rochelle, the Protestants' fortified town, and were taking cavalry and horsemen with them. Norris stated that the Queen Mother had sent the Protestant leaders a written request to stay at some place where she would meet with them, but they were worried that if they stopped opposing forces under Marshal Tavannes⁶ would overtake them, and he had promised to have their heads. Norris reported that the letter had been intercepted by others and it only made the Protestant leaders hasten the more to reach Rochelle.⁷ Apparently the Catholic leaders, perhaps under the direction of the Cardinal of Lorraine, had given secret orders to arrest the leaders of the Huguenots.⁸

On September 1, King Charles issued a proclamation, or French leaders issued a proclamation in his name, it is not clear which, commanding leaders of the *gendarmerie* to assemble at Orleans because there were reports that the Huguenot

⁴Ibid., 535.

⁵Ibid., 539.

⁶Marshal Gaspard de Tavannes was a French military leader with a history of opposition to rights for Huguenots, and had been entrusted with a plan to execute Condé and Coligny. Baird, 245, 266, 678.

⁷*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 534-535. Sutherland states that the letter was intercepted by Catholics, stating that this shows the Queen Mother's policy differed from that of Lorraine. *Huguenot Struggle*, 168.

⁸Salmon, *Society in Crisis*, 173. It is possible that Tavannes himself had warned Condé and Coligny, despite Norris's depiction of him as seeking their heads. See *ibid.*

leaders had taken up arms.⁹ Norris reported on August 29, to Elizabeth that the King had previously given orders for all his captains and bands to be ready for battle by September 10. Lest Queen Elizabeth think that things were equal between the parties, he told her that the Catholics had murdered 6000 Protestants since the Edict of Pacification. He had written this letter hoping to get Elizabeth to intervene, saying that there were rumors that England was making good preparation for the upcoming war.¹⁰

On September 2, 1568, the war was commencing and Norris continued to try to get Elizabeth more involved. Apparently, she had a question as to whether the Prince was justified in fighting, and Norris wrote her to assure her that he was. He stated on September 2, that he was writing to let Elizabeth know of the dealings of the Cardinal of Lorraine to let her judge whether or not Condé was justified in taking up arms. Norris stated that Lorraine had given orders for 50 companies of armed men to be placed in various towns most suspected of being havens for Protestants, and that the armed men were charged to forage off of the Protestants and to do other things to them. Norris stated that Lorraine had also requested captains of ports and passages to harass Huguenots. Also, while Lorraine was sending assurances to Huguenots that the King would honor the Edicts of Pacification and was attempting to get Protestants with “scrupulous consciences,” to give oaths to not take up arms, Norris stated that Lorraine was preparing Catholics to fight and was arming for war. According to Norris many French Catholics were ready to fight and hoped to thereby confiscate Protestant goods and estates. Moreover, Norris reported that Rome and Spain had promised the Cardinal of Lorraine to provide support. The Cardinal promised the King and Queen Mother that they would be able to exterminate the Protestants and thus see their realm free of heresy, and he had convinced the Queen Mother to go along. However, according to Norris, Condé had discovered what was happening and because of that

⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 537.*

¹⁰*Ibid., 534-535.*

began to gather Protestants around him and with a small force went to the Protestant stronghold of Rochelle.¹¹ For Norris the commencing war was the fault of Catholics, particularly the Cardinal of Lorraine. Norris also believed that many Catholics in France were willing to participate to obtain property from Huguenots. In contrast, Norris continually portrayed the Protestants as fighting simply to maintain the ability to practice their religion, although he did feel that Queen Mother was motivated by religious fervor to a certain extent, since she was at least partially persuaded to go along with the Cardinal's plans by a desire to stamp out heresy.

Lorraine seemed to be aware that his actions would lead to a renewal of war. Lorraine's policy of hostility to Huguenot leaders in a time of peace had forced them to take up arms again.¹² In addition, Condé had received information from an intercepted letter that certain Catholic lords had claimed to have orders to kill all the Huguenots and he had learned of another plan to have the gentry attack the Huguenots when plans were ready.¹³ Thus, Norris did seem to be justified somewhat in his contentions that the Catholics were the aggressors.

Norris wrote Cecil on September 2, urging him to try to recover Calais, but mentioning little about the coming war other than to state that the determination of the Catholics continued against Condé.¹⁴ Norris was clearly trying to convince Elizabeth to send help to the Huguenots, and did not feel the need to write such detailed letters slanted toward the Protestants to Cecil as he did with Elizabeth.

Norris wrote both Cecil and Elizabeth to let them know the reactions of the French Catholic leaders to the statements from Elizabeth concerning her support for the Huguenots. On September 9, Norris told Cecil that he had been to an unpleasant meeting with the Queen Mother, the King and privy council regarding an unspecified

¹¹*Ibid.*, 537-539.

¹²*Massacre*, 78.

¹³*Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁴*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 539.

charge he had received, and they wanted him to put it in writing. This apparently referred to the Queen's letter of August 27, wherein she had instructed Norris to tell the King she had been informed of mistreatment of Huguenots and that the King should investigate.¹⁵ Norris wrote Elizabeth on September 15, with details about a meeting on September 9 with the French King concerning the instructions Elizabeth had given him to relate to the King. Norris stated that the King asked him to put in writing that which he had been charged by the Queen, and that after he had done so the King and his council would deliberate and give him a response. Norris also stated that while he was waiting to meet with the King, who was sick and bedridden, he learned that the Cardinal of Lorraine was glad that Elizabeth had "declared" war for the Huguenots, since she would then lose the favor of the King of Spain and the Holy Roman Emperor, who would thus follow any enterprise into England.¹⁶ Thus, while the French royal family was less than thrilled with Elizabeth's statements about the mistreatment of the Huguenots, Lorraine, according to Norris, saw this as a means to gain allies against England.

Also, on September 8, the Cardinal of Châtillon wrote Queen Elizabeth to ask if he could seek refuge at her court, as he feared falling into the hands of his enemies and wished to go to England.¹⁷ Châtillon had left France on three hours notice, having been informed that he was to be arrested.¹⁸ Châtillon would receive a warm welcome at Elizabeth's court, as noted later. In his letter to Elizabeth dated September 8, 1568, the Cardinal of Châtillon told Elizabeth about the way the French authorities had treated the Huguenots since the Edict of Pacification, but noted that Elizabeth had already been informed of their treatment.¹⁹ Indeed, Elizabeth had been informed of the treatment the

¹⁵See *ibid.*, 532-533.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 548.

¹⁷*Cal S.P. Foreign, 1566-1568*, 544.

¹⁸*Massacre*, 88.

¹⁹The Cardinal of Châtillon, to Queen Elizabeth, 8 September, 1568, reprinted in E. G. Atkinson, "The Cardinal of Châtillon in England," *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London* 3 (1888-1891): 251.

Huguenots were receiving, as Norris repeatedly mentioned it in his letters.

After Norris had related Elizabeth's statements to the French King regarding her desire for the safety of the Huguenots, the French King sent the Bishop of Rennes to meet with Queen Elizabeth to give his response and to learn more about Norris's statements.²⁰ On September 12, King Charles wrote a letter to Elizabeth informing her that he had learned of the charge which she had given to Norris, and was sending the Bishop of Rennes directly to her with his response.²¹ This mission would in part consist of the French Royal family questioning whether Norris was speaking for Elizabeth when he supported the Protestant cause.

Norris wrote to protect himself upon learning of the mission of the Bishop of Rennes. Norris told Elizabeth on September 15, that Montmorency had asked him to send word to the English Queen that if she granted the request of Rennes it would be to the benefit of the Cardinal of Lorraine but bad for the Huguenots, but if she refused to grant Rennes' requests the plans of Lorraine would be thwarted.²² Norris also wrote Cecil on the same day and told him that the Bishop of Rennes should be sent away without granting any of his requests. Norris explained that in doing so he would frustrate the enterprises of the Cardinal of Lorraine and benefit the Huguenots.²³ Thus Norris saw this mission of the Bishop of Rennes as important for the struggle between the Catholics and the Huguenots, and also for the power of Lorraine.

The mission of the Bishop of Rennes was in part to undermine the authority of Norris, but also to try to keep the English government from aiding the Huguenots. The Bishop of Rennes, arrived in London on September 23, 1568, according to his brother,

²⁰The Bishop of Rennes had at one time been associated with the French Protestants. *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 550. He was also the brother of M. de la Mothe Fénélon, the French ambassador in England. *Ibid.*, 552.

²¹*Ibid.*, 546.

²²*Ibid.*, 548.

²³*Ibid.*

the French Ambassador.²⁴ When the Bishop of Rennes appeared before Elizabeth on September 28, he declared to her that Norris's comments to the French royal family had been "strange and full of ambiguity," but appeared to state that Elizabeth had the intention of acting between the French King and his subjects.²⁵ According to the report of the Bishop of Rennes, the French King and Queen Mother questioned whether Norris had been commissioned to make such statements, and if so they would have more to say regarding that matter. Rennes also told Elizabeth that the French King contended that his design was only to establish more order in his kingdom and to take from those who were disobeying him the means by which they did so. The French King also stated that he hoped Elizabeth would not meddle in the affairs of his country, as he would not allow anyone to do so. The King, along with his mother, requested that Elizabeth not listen to those who counseled her to favor the subjects of another Prince (Condé), and asserted that doing so would be dangerous for her own realm, as her subjects had not always been obedient, and the disease of disobedience was contagious. However, If she was of the opinion to favor the Protestants they wanted her to speak clearly and frankly.²⁶ Thus, the French royal family had doubts as to whether Norris was actually transmitting the desires of his Queen when he questioned how the Huguenots were being treated and sought to find out Elizabeth's intentions directly from her.

Elizabeth wanted the French leadership to understand that Norris had been speaking her will. Elizabeth sent a response to the Bishop of Rennes defending Norris, and her written response had the seal of Norris attached. She stated that the writing in French prepared by Norris did not differ in substance from what she had sent him in English, and that therefore Norris should not be treated as someone who had spoken other than as he had been directed. She also stated that the message delivered to the

²⁴Ibid., 552.

²⁵Ibid., 555.

²⁶Ibid., 555-556.

French King was clearer than Rennes had claimed. Elizabeth explained that when she had sent the message she had learned that various forces had been gathered to destroy many of the leaders of the reformed religion. Elizabeth also told the Bishop of Rennes that she did not mean to offend the French King, but was only admonishing the King for being abused by evil counselors. Finally, Elizabeth declared that she would never aid anyone to rebel against his prince.²⁷ In this response Elizabeth showed her support for Norris and his statements to the French King on her behalf in favor of the Protestants. However, she framed her response in such a way as to not offend the French monarchs, placing the blame for the problems on evil counselors, likely including the unnamed Cardinal of Lorraine, and contending that while she may have been speaking in favor of the Protestants, she was not supporting their rebellion against their lawful ruler, but was only supporting their ability to practice their religion.

Elizabeth sent a copy of her response to Norris, and also sent him a letter explaining what she had done. She related to Norris that she had told the Bishop of Rennes that the statements from Norris which the French King did not like had been given under her direction. Elizabeth also told Norris that after the Bishop returned he should go visit the King and Queen Mother to see how they had received her response. In addition, Elizabeth directed Norris to tell the King and Queen Mother that she felt she should permit the Cardinal of Châtillon to find refuge in England, stating that she found he was a loyal subject to the King and Queen Mother.²⁸ Elizabeth appeared to be repeating part of the dogma of the Huguenots, that they were not disloyal subjects, and had only taken up arms to defend their ability to practice their religion.

Norris was pleased that his Queen had given him a vote of support, and it was something about which he had worried previously. In July, Norris had remarked to Cecil

²⁷Ibid., 558.

²⁸Ibid., 560.

that he was glad to hear that Elizabeth had a good opinion of his services.²⁹ On this occasion Norris responded to the Queen on October 22, thanking her for confirming what he had done, for he understood that if he had not received commission from her the French King would have commanded him to stay in his house as a prisoner.³⁰ This change in the attitude of Elizabeth appeared to have greatly bothered the French King, and he appeared worried about the English making some intervention on behalf of the Protestants. Moreover, Norris began what would be a number of comments where he believed he was being mistreated for his support of the Huguenots.

Norris met with the King and Queen Mother after the return of the Bishop of Rennes. On October 22, Norris wrote Queen Elizabeth of this audience he had with the French royal family. The King told Norris that they were fully satisfied by her response through the Bishop of Rennes. Norris also stated that he had reported to the King and Queen Mother that after the Cardinal of Châtillon had come into England, the Queen had spoken to witnesses who claimed that those who pursued Châtillon had vowed to have his head, and Elizabeth believed she should give him refuge, particularly when he had professed loyalty to the King and Queen Mother.³¹ In regards to the Cardinal of Châtillon, Norris reported that the French King stated that he did not need to sneak out of France, as the King would have protected him in his house, but now the King considered him as an enemy and a rebel, and Norris warned that unless Elizabeth protected him, the King and Queen Mother meant to kill Châtillon and make his head a present to the Pope.³² The French King and Queen Mother were apparently satisfied with Elizabeth's explanations, but as will be seen, Norris believed they would treat him

²⁹Ibid., 522.

³⁰Ibid., 567.

³¹Ibid., 566. It appears that the Cardinal of Châtillon was not simply a refuge seeking protection in England. He also informed Throckmorton and Cecil of events that would aid them in assisting the French Huguenots, such as giving the identity of a Catholic spy posing as a Protestant. Ibid., 561.

³²Ibid., 566.

differently because of his support for the Protestant cause.

Norris still believed he had some influence, not only with Elizabeth, but at the French court as well, despite how he believed he was being treated. He told Cecil on September 15, that the French King was determined to publish an edict taking away all protection for the Huguenots, but the message was stayed at the request of Norris, and Norris believed that in doing so he had helped prevent the ruin of a number of Protestants.³³ However, Norris reported on September 30, to Elizabeth, that the leaders of France had broken the edicts of pacification and had forbidden the Huguenots under pain of death to practice the Protestant religion, and for all officers of the religion to give up their offices. He also reported that at Orleans, where Norris claimed that those of the religion were worshipping with the King's permission, Catholics had burned two Protestant temples, abused wives and maids and forbid all to leave the town.³⁴ Norris wrote Cecil the same day and, in addition to what he told the Queen, reported that a Protestant had told him there were 50 Italians who had been paid to poison wine wells and other victuals of the Protestants.³⁵ Thus, Norris continued to portray the Catholics as villains in the conflicts.

The French government, under the leadership of the Cardinal of Lorraine, officially removed protection for the Protestants, which the peace of Longjumeau had nominally granted to them. Lorraine was largely responsible for the Edict of St. Maur, issued in September, which revoked the peace of Longjumeau, declared that Catholicism was the only legal religion, and ordered all pastors to leave the country in two weeks.³⁶ This edict, and a similar one issued on December 22, also required the

³³Ibid., 548.

³⁴Ibid., 557.

³⁵Ibid., 558.

³⁶*Huguenot Struggle*, 170. See also Georges Livet, *Les Guerres de Religion (1559-1598)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), 16; this edict prohibited all preaching, assembly and exercise of religion except for "Catholique, Apostolique [and] Romaine." Ordinances de St. Maur, September, 1568, reprinted in *Édits des Guerres*

members of *parlements* and of the universities to give an oath of loyalty to the Catholic Church.³⁷ This is further evidence of the Cardinal of Lorraine's leadership in the Catholic fight against the Huguenots.

The Huguenots had been complaining for some time that the Cardinal of Lorraine had been the person responsible for the actions against the Huguenots, and that was their reason for the attempted kidnapping of the King at the start of the second religious war. Some of the Catholics also shared this opinion and the King felt required to make some showing that he was in charge. Norris reported to Cecil on October 29, that the King had gone to Orleans to make a showing of leadership to those who might have thought his absence meant that Lorraine was the instigator of all that was occurring, and to draw more men to his side. Perhaps because of these problems, Norris stated that there were divisions and jealousy among the nobles, which worked to aid Condé.³⁸ These divisions among the Catholic forces would give Norris more hope for the Huguenots.

There apparently were not any such problems with division among the peasants in Norris's eyes, however, as they strongly supported the Catholic cause. Norris stated to Cecil on October 29, that in Provence and Languedoc the peasants had killed any suspected of being Protestant. The same thing was occurring at Toulouse, Lyons, and Bordeaux, where in addition the authorities were requiring everyone to attend Mass. Also, according to Norris, Catholics had murdered several Huguenots at Auxerre with such cruelty "that the very Papists abhor to hear the same."³⁹ Thus, according to Norris, not only were the leaders of the nation persecuting the Protestants, but the common people were doing so as well.

de Religion, 59.

³⁷Livet, 16. *Parlements* were not legislative bodies, but were judicial courts. See Holt, 10.

³⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 568.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 568-569.

Norris continued to see persecution and mistreatment of the Protestants at the hands of French leaders. Norris told Elizabeth and Cecil in letters dated November 11, that in the areas of France where the King was able to he seized all the possessions of those who were supporting Condé, and he suspended the offices of those who were Protestant officers.⁴⁰ Huguenots and Huguenot supporters, according to Norris, were suffering at the hands of Catholics. He told Leicester that after discovering a plot to deliver Bordeaux to Condé, Monluc had executed several councilors in the city. Norris reported to Leicester that in Paris, the authorities searched out Protestant books and had burnt a number of the books.⁴¹ This continues Norris's theme of seeing not just a war, but organized persecution against the Huguenots.

Also, in letters to both Cecil and Elizabeth dated November 11, Cecil told of a failed attempt or attempts to make a peace settlement, putting most of the blame for the failure of a peace settlement on the Catholics. Norris told Elizabeth that there had been a hope for peace through the Duchess of Ferrara,⁴² who was friendly toward the house of Guise but also a zealous Protestant, though her sickness prevented a real attempt at peace.⁴³ Norris told Cecil that there had been some movement to reach a peace accord, but that he had no hope that peace could be achieved because of the "want of keeping faith on the King's side."⁴⁴ The reason for the difference in explanations given to Cecil and Elizabeth is curious. Although Norris had previously given different accounts to Elizabeth and Cecil, often worried that Elizabeth was finding him to favor the Protestants too much, in recent months Elizabeth was appearing to side more with the Protestants, or at least was coming to believe that they were being mistreated.

⁴⁰Ibid., 573, 574.

⁴¹Ibid., 579.

⁴²Renée de France, Duchess of Ferrara, was connected by marriage to the Guise family, but often gave refuge to Protestants. Baird, 73, 110, 111, 327, 674.

⁴³*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68, 573.*

⁴⁴Ibid., 574.

Also, it is clear from his message to Cecil that Norris believed it was the Catholics, and not the Protestants, who were responsible for the conflict and who were preventing a peace.

In the letter to Elizabeth on November 11, Norris noted that he had heard that 50 English gentlemen had arrived at Rochelle.⁴⁵ There were apparently other English in France, and the French were not well disposed toward them, as Norris noted to Cecil in a letter dated November 25, stating that he could get no redress for wrongs done to the Queen's subjects other than "fair words."⁴⁶ Thus, in Norris's opinion the French were treating English citizens badly, and he perhaps saw this as a sign that the French Catholics wanted to expand what he saw as persecution of Protestants to England.

On December 8, 1568, Norris reported to Elizabeth attempts at foreign alliances by both sides. He stated that as the Queen of Spain had died, the Cardinals of Lorraine and Guise were attempting to arrange a marriage between the Spanish King and Madame Margaret. Also, according to Norris, the Queen Mother was seeking a marriage between her son, King Charles IX, and the daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor. He also mentioned to Elizabeth that the Queen Mother was demanding 200,000 francs from the Parisians to pay for mercenaries. Norris reported that Condé was seeking foreign aid through a strictly military, rather than a marriage, alliance. The Prince of Orange from the Netherlands had come to France to give aid to the Protestants and Norris made sure he told Elizabeth about this.⁴⁷ In this letter Norris was suggesting that there was direct aid to the Huguenots in the form of armies and the Catholics were having trouble paying their hired soldiers, suggesting to Elizabeth that this was a good time to intervene in France.

Norris continued to write Elizabeth and Cecil about the religious situation in

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., 578.

⁴⁷Ibid., 582.

France. In a letter to Elizabeth on December 26, Norris did report some mistreatment of Protestants, stating that in Paris during the holidays the Catholic leadership had expressly commanded the Huguenots in that city to stay in their houses.⁴⁸ In a letter to Cecil the same day Norris reported some events at the French court which could have an impact on how they viewed the war. He told Cecil that there had been a fire that burned some of the Queen's lodgings, which caused the King to be in a melancholy mood, thinking it was a bad omen, and the Queen Mother would only let him receive good news. Norris did not comment on whether he viewed it as any kind of omen. He also told Cecil that delays in the Prince of Orange giving aid to Condé were causing great inconvenience to the French Protestant leader.⁴⁹ Norris continued to list problems for the Huguenots in an effort to help their cause, but also commented on events at the French court.

The King of France was also sometimes communicating with Elizabeth through his ambassador in London, M. de la Mothe Fénélon. De la Mothe Fénélon told Elizabeth on behalf of the French King that the Protestants were delaying while waiting for the Prince of Orange to come with reinforcements, but stated that the King's army, as well as a couple of rivers, had prevented him from reaching the Protestants. Moreover, the French King wanted Elizabeth to understand that the King's army was twice as fine and strong as that of the Prince.⁵⁰ In another December letter to Elizabeth, de la Mothe Fénélon emphasized the good estate generally of the King's army.⁵¹ The French were emphasizing the strength of the King's army in relation to the Huguenot army in an effort to show England that there was no question the Catholic army would prevail and that England should thus not send aid.

Norris was aware of this effort and saw fit to write that there was not such a

⁴⁸Ibid., 587.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

discrepancy between the two armies as alleged. On New Year's day 1569, Norris wrote Elizabeth to tell her news of the war, and emphasized Protestant successes. He told of a battle on December 28, 1568, in which the Prince of Condé made the Catholic Duc d'Anjou and his forces retire three leagues, and the next day Anjou had to retreat another four leagues.⁵² Norris also noted that there was great poverty among the armies, but especially for the King, who was pursuing Condé while lacking many necessities. Norris also told Elizabeth that the Prince of Orange was trying to come to the aid of Condé with troops from both the low countries and France. Norris stated that by these events Elizabeth could perceive that the Huguenots were not in as desperate of terms as their enemies abroad asserted.⁵³ Norris thus did not want Elizabeth to think that the cause of the Protestants was hopeless, apparently worried that she might give up on helping them if they had no chance of success. However, he also noted that the French King was raising a new army to take to the field against Condé in a couple of weeks,⁵⁴ letting Elizabeth also know that the Huguenots were still in need of aid.

Norris wrote Elizabeth again on January 10, and commented on the relative strength of the Protestant army, and the disarray on the side of the King in a continued attempt to counteract the French attempts to suggest that the Protestant forces were beyond hope. Norris stated that the good disposition and order of Condé's army was in direct contrast to the army of Anjou, which was oppressing the country with insolent behavior toward both Protestants and Catholics.⁵⁵ Thus, not only was the Huguenot army somewhat equal to the Catholic army, in Norris's opinion, but Norris believed the Catholic army was barbaric toward Huguenots and Catholics alike.

⁵²Anjou was the younger brother of the French King, who had recently been named lieutenant general of the Kingdom and was the future Henry III, King of France. See *Huguenot Struggle*, 156, 388.

⁵³*Cal. S.P. Foreign, Elizabeth I, 1569-71* (London: Longman & Co., etc., 1874), 2.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 7.

Norris also noted the continued conflict between the houses of Guise and Montmorency. Norris reported to Elizabeth that the Cardinal of Lorraine, a member of the Guise family, spoke against Montmorency to the King, alleging that Montmorency was involved in secret intelligence with the Protestant Duke of Orange. To alleviate suspicion against himself, Montmorency left Paris to meet with the King in a council without the Cardinal of Lorraine present. Moreover, in this letter Norris seemed to consider Montmorency as a friend to the Protestants. He stated that while Montmorency was absent from Paris, the Parisians had imprisoned 40 of the wealthiest Protestants in the city, alleging that they had loaned money to Condé.⁵⁶ Thus Norris continued to see the greatest threat from Lorraine, an enemy of Montmorency, whom he portrayed as friendly to the Huguenots.

On January 22, Norris wrote Cecil to continue his attempt to show that the French government was trying to portray the Huguenot army as vastly inferior to the Catholic forces in order to discourage English aid to the French Protestants. He informed the Secretary that the French ambassador to England had written King Charles that he had “used all his diligence to persuade the Queen,” that the armies of Condé and Orange were beaten, in order that Elizabeth would not send them any aid. Norris also stated that the French ambassador was unable to learn whether or not Elizabeth would take up arms or not, but stated that she favored the Protestants because of her counselors, who were great protectors of the Protestants.⁵⁷ Thus, Norris wanted to be sure that Cecil was aware that the French authorities were trying to discourage Elizabeth from aiding the Huguenots in their descriptions of the strength of the opposing French forces.

Norris also reported on rumors about English subjects in France. Norris told

⁵⁶Ibid., 6.

⁵⁷Ibid., 19. Also, in January, 1569, Parisians made at least four attacks on Protestants in the city. Diefendorf, 1086.

Elizabeth and Cecil in letters dated January 10, that there were rumors that 3000 Englishmen had landed at Rochelle on English ships.⁵⁸ Norris also informed Cecil that he had also heard that 10 English ships, along with 10 other Protestant vessels, had gone to Brittany, but were repulsed by the people there.⁵⁹ Norris told Elizabeth that there were rumors in France that the English nobility and gentry had declared to Elizabeth that if the French King were able to suppress the Protestants in France, he would join in a league with other Catholics to do the same throughout Christendom. Therefore they were requesting that Elizabeth give aid to the Huguenots.⁶⁰ Norris reported this rumor of English support hoping it were true and that further aid would be forthcoming.

Norris stated to Cecil that there was some movement to make an agreement of peace, and this desired peace would allow the Protestants to enjoy the benefit of the King's earlier edicts which had granted the Huguenots the right to worship, would grant Condé some territory, and would allow Condé to aid the Prince of Orange against the Spaniards in Flanders. However, Norris explained that the King and Queen Mother would not consider such a peace, as the Cardinal of Lorraine had persuaded them that it would be dangerous to give in to Condé in this manner.⁶¹ Thus, Norris continued to put the blame for the conflict on the Catholics, and in particular, on the Cardinal of Lorraine.

Norris also worried about the presence of the Scottish Queen, Mary, in England. On January 22 Norris told Cecil that the French Ambassador had written his King to speak of Mary, Queen of Scots, whom he stated was unable to go to a Catholic house

⁵⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 7.* There were a number of Englishmen who had come to Rochelle to join Condé's forces, as well as Dutch and English privateers. Thompson, 372, 373.

⁵⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 7.*

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 7-8.

for greater safety. Norris also told Cecil that he thought it would be better if the Queen of Scots were sent out of England, as the Cardinal of Lorraine and other Catholics wanted Mary to reign in England, and would destroy Elizabeth to reach that goal.⁶² Norris was worried, and with good reason, that Mary's presence in England would attract those who might want to overthrow Elizabeth for religious reasons.

Norris began to make more comments about his own situation along with giving news of events in France. Norris wrote Cecil on January 4, to let him know that the Duke of Florence was making a loan of 100,000 crowns to the French King. Norris also wanted Cecil to know that he was living in great poverty.⁶³ Norris did not say so, but this situation may have been due to his conflicts with the royal family over his statements from Elizabeth questioning the treatment of the Huguenots.

Norris later wrote more clearly his opinion that his own situation was becoming precarious because of his support for the Huguenots, and also perceived that other English were being treated poorly. Norris told the Secretary on January 15, that the French at Rouen had arrested English merchants and their ships and had imprisoned many of these who were Protestants as they feared they were bringing money to aid Condé.⁶⁴ Norris wrote a letter dated January 24, addressed to both Leicester and Cecil, stating that things were so dangerous that he barely dared to write. Norris explained that on January 20, he had sent his secretary to the French court to demand the release of the English belongings which had been impounded at Rouen, but the King and Queen Mother refused to sign letters to be sent to Rouen to facilitate the release of the belongings. Norris learned in response that the King knew of English aid to the Protestants, but the King apparently was not sure if Elizabeth was directly involved, and threatened that if Elizabeth were to meddle in French affairs, he would make an

⁶²Ibid., 19.

⁶³Ibid., 4.

⁶⁴Ibid., 13.

agreement with foreign powers against her.⁶⁵ Norris explained that a captain had arrived in Paris from Anjou claiming that Elizabeth had sent 100,000 crowns, as well as powder and munitions to Rochelle to aid Condé.⁶⁶ Norris told Cecil on January 25, that he had denied to a representative of the French King that Elizabeth had sent armor, munitions and money to Condé at Rochelle.⁶⁷ Whether Norris actually believed this or was just saying this to aid in obtaining the English goods which had been seized is unclear. However, Norris also told Cecil that he was still unsuccessful in regaining the English possessions which had been seized.⁶⁸ Thus Norris saw the situation as becoming dangerous not only for the Huguenots but also for English Protestants as well, including Norris himself.

In spite of the Norris's denials it appears there was some English aid going to the Huguenots, although it may have been relatively minor. On January 10, the Prince of Navarre,⁶⁹ on behalf of the Prince of Condé, wrote to thank the English Queen for assistance she had given the French Protestants and Condé desired Cecil to continue this support.⁷⁰ The Cardinal of Châtillon wrote Cecil at the end of January that the Princes of Navarre and Condé had informed him that their greatest need was for shoes, and wanted Cecil to provide a license for French merchants to purchase some shoes in England and convey them to Rochelle.⁷¹ He informed Cecil on February 8, that they needed 200 skins for the shoes.⁷² This does not appear to be much in the way of aid, but the Queen of Navarre wrote Elizabeth on February 1, to thank her for the favor she had shown to the Protestant cause.⁷³ Coligny also wrote the Queen on February 2, and

⁶⁵Ibid., 20.

⁶⁶Ibid., 21.

⁶⁷Ibid., 21-22.

⁶⁸Ibid., 22.

⁶⁹Henry of Navarre, the future Henry IV, King of France. See *Massacre*, 314.

⁷⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 8.

⁷¹Ibid., 24.

⁷²Ibid., 28.

⁷³Ibid., 25.

asked her to remember the situation of the Huguenots and to send whatever help she could.⁷⁴ Coligny and the Queen of Navarre had apparently coordinated their efforts as they both told her that a representative to London was coming with news of their situation.⁷⁵ Thus, English aid was being sent to the Protestants, at least in the form of provisions.

Norris continued to write about his personal troubles with the French government. On February 10, 1569, Norris informed Elizabeth the Queen Mother had told him that Elizabeth should not give seditious persons money and supplies, which she claimed that the English Vice-Admiral Winter had done at Rochelle. When Norris denied that Elizabeth knew anything about such aid, the Queen Mother also told Norris that she was aware of the letters Norris had written to Elizabeth that the time was ripe to make an attempt at Calais or Rochelle. Norris explained that he had denied this as well and claimed that Elizabeth's ships were only at sea to protect English merchants. The Queen Mother ended the conversation by offering to exchange captured English ships for French ships that had been captured by the English.⁷⁶ Thus, while continuing in his duties as ambassador, Norris was coming to believe he was suspected by the French leaders of aiding the Huguenots.

Also, in this letter Norris reminded Elizabeth of the dire straits in which the Catholics sometimes found themselves. He stated that Anjou and another Catholic leader had been forced to sell their church plate and some of their relics to have enough money.⁷⁷ This was apparently a continuation in the efforts of Norris to dispel the French statements that the Protestants were beyond help as the Catholic forces were much

⁷⁴Ibid., 26.

⁷⁵Ibid., 25, 26.

⁷⁶Ibid., 29. In this letter, Norris showed the influence and power of the Queen Mother by stating that for the first time he had met with the French King without his mother being present.

⁷⁷Ibid.

stronger.

Norris wrote Cecil again quickly, complaining in a letter the next day about how he and his staff were being treated by the French government. He stated that since he had left Paris (he was now in a town called Joinville), the steward of his house, who was also the instructor for his children, and whose father had been burned for being a Protestant, had been arrested by the leaders of the city of Paris, but had luckily been quickly released. Norris also complained that his wife's doctor had been imprisoned. He requested that Cecil have the Queen write favorable letters on his behalf so that he would be able to enjoy the same advantages as other ambassadors.⁷⁸ For Norris, the war between the Catholics and Protestants was starting to be felt by him, and as a Protestant ambassador, especially one from a country believed to be aiding the Huguenots, he believed he was also being persecuted.

On February 14, Norris wrote letters to both Elizabeth and Cecil complaining of how he had been questioned by the King and Queen Mother, not only about what the English were allegedly doing in France, but what Norris was doing to help them. Norris informed the Queen that King Charles had told him that he thought it strange that so many English ships were harming his subjects and stated that he wanted to know within 15 days whether there was still friendship between them, and Norris responded by stating that he hoped the King would not think poorly of Elizabeth, and then left his presence. Norris noted to Elizabeth that he did not think he could obtain an answer to such an important question within 15 days. However, upon leaving the King a M. Morvilliers⁷⁹ repeated the King's accusations to Norris and then accused Elizabeth of aiding those who robbed on the seas, and Norris responded that the sale of goods by robbers was unknown to the English Queen. He also mentioned to Elizabeth something

⁷⁸Ibid., 30.

⁷⁹This may have been Jean de Morvilliers, the Bishop of Orleans, who also served as a royal envoy to the Huguenots. Baird, 210, 669.

about having to explain to the French what was in his packets being sent to England, but did not give any further explanation at this time,⁸⁰ although he would give further explanation in correspondence to Cecil.

In his letter to Cecil on February 14, Norris commented more on his packets, as well as further accusations against him from the French royal family. He noted that the Queen Mother had complained to him for urging Elizabeth in his letters to make an attempt at Calais or Rochelle and the next day the King had accused Norris of conveying letters for the Huguenots in his packets to England. Norris seemed greatly concerned at the accusations brought against him by Charles and Catherine. He suggested to Cecil that it would perhaps be better for someone to take his place as ambassador who would be less suspect than him and asked that he be recalled.⁸¹ Norris believed that as a known supporter of the Protestants, he would no longer be trusted by the French royal family and would be unable to carry out his duties as ambassador. However, Cecil and the Queen apparently did not concur in his doubts, as he would stay in France for almost two more years.

On March 5, Norris, who had traveled to the city of Metz, wrote letters to Elizabeth and Cecil complaining of more problems in carrying out his duties. He informed his Queen that the Governor of Toul prevented him from departing, apparently from Joinville, and while other ambassadors were invited to a banquet on Shrove Tuesday, Norris was left out. Subsequently, according to Norris, the Governor told Norris that the French King wanted him to come to court and offered to send soldiers to escort him, but Norris refused the offer.⁸² Norris told Cecil of other dangers he faced. He stated that while he was absent from his house in Paris, his greatest worry was for his wife as someone, apparently French authorities, were threatening to search his

⁸⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 32.*

⁸¹*Ibid.*

⁸²*Ibid.*, 41.

residence.⁸³ Norris believed that his perceived role in attempting to bring aid to the Protestants had put him and his family in danger. Lady Norris also wrote Cecil to complain of letters from the Queen that had apparently been intercepted, and stated that she had written her husband regarding this problem.⁸⁴ Both Norris and his wife were becoming worried about the treatment they were receiving in France.

In his letter dated March 15, to Cecil, Norris, still at Metz, continued to complain of the troubles he faced in carrying out his duties. He stated that officers of the King had three times delayed his packets to the Queen. When he complained to the King, Charles claimed not to have known anything about it, and did not agree with Norris's recommendation that these officers be punished. Norris claimed that the problems with his packets were the fault of the Cardinal of Lorraine, whom he claimed was ruling the King and his subjects. Norris also reported that a messenger he had sent to England in February was detained three days by the Cardinal of Lorraine and then convinced to give up secrets for 300 crowns. Norris stated that this incident hindered the Princes of Orange and Condé and revealed their secret plans. Norris again asked Cecil if he could be recalled, claiming that he could not receive the Queen's letters which contained his instructions.⁸⁵ Thus, Norris believed his situation was becoming more precarious and would prevent him from carrying out his duties.

On March 13, the war took a very bad turn for the Protestants. At the Battle of Jarnac, the Prince of Condé was killed, and the Prince of Navarre took command of his army.⁸⁶ After Condé's death the Prince of Navarre wrote Cecil on the March 18, to request help in obtaining aid from Elizabeth, and assured him that the Huguenots would rather die than give up their religion.⁸⁷ The Queen of Navarre also wrote Elizabeth on

⁸³Ibid., 42.

⁸⁴Ibid., 43.

⁸⁵Ibid., 47.

⁸⁶Ibid., 45.

⁸⁷Ibid., 48.

March 21, to seek her continued support and of the Protestants' resolve to continue their struggle.⁸⁸ Despite the loss of their leader, the Huguenots continued to seek English aid and declared their intention to continue the struggle for which Condé had died.

While the death of Condé was obviously a significant blow to the Huguenots, to some French Catholics it was apparently a time for celebration. The French King wrote Elizabeth to tell her what he saw as the good news of the success in the battle of Jarnac.⁸⁹ The battle not only saw the death of Condé, but it was also a clear victory over the Protestants by an army led by the Duke of Anjou, the sixteen-year-old son of the Queen Mother.⁹⁰ In fact, this Catholic victory sparked celebrations across France in the form of *Te Deums* and bonfires.⁹¹ Estienne Pasquier described a "joye publique," at the news of the death of Condé, reporting that everyone rejoiced, from "le grand" to the "plus petit (smallest)."⁹² In Paris, "all the stores and shops were closed as though it were a holiday," and the clergy marched in a religious procession bearing relics of the saints.⁹³ Further, the Pope saw the victory at Jarnac as a direct answer to prayer.⁹⁴ The Catholics must have seen the victory at Jarnac as a religious blessing.

Norris did not learn of Condé's death for several days, but finally told Cecil of the death on March 24. Even though Condé had died in battle, Norris saw a more sinister motive, stating that Anjou had sought revenge against Condé for destroying a bridge after he had crossed it.⁹⁵ Thus, Norris saw the death of Condé as further evidence of

⁸⁸Ibid., 50.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Strage, 161-162.

⁹¹Ibid., 162.

⁹²Estienne Pasquier to Monsieur de Querquifinen, Seigneur d'Ardivilliers, 1569, reprinted in *Lettres Historiques*, 193.

⁹³Thompson, 376.

⁹⁴Ibid., 377.

⁹⁵*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 51-52. There was also some belief that Condé had been shot and killed *after* the battle. See Wilson, 121, and Zoff, 119.

the evil designs of the French Catholics.

While relating that Condé had died, Norris also continued to recount his personal problems. Norris had instructed the bearer of this letter to tell Cecil Norris's bad situation because of a traitor lately returned to France named Mitty, and asked for Mitty to be recalled.⁹⁶ Not only was Norris worried about his treatment at the hands of the French government, he also believed that he needed to fear English subjects who might be sympathetic to the Catholics.

As March, 1569 ended, Norris appeared to be at a very low point as ambassador. The third religious war was going badly for the Huguenots, and their leader, the Prince of Condé, had died at the Battle of Jarnac in March, 1569. In addition, Norris believed he was being treated poorly by French authorities because of his support for the Huguenots. Norris even asked Cecil to recall him as ambassador, as he believed he could no longer perform his duties because of the way he was being treated. However, Elizabeth and Cecil chose to keep Norris as ambassador, and he would continue to serve in that capacity for nearly two more years.

Wallace MacCaffrey asserts that Norris was simply an observer, relaying what he saw and experienced, and was not an active participant in diplomacy.⁹⁷ However, neither Queen Elizabeth of England, nor the Queen Mother of France, saw Norris as simply an observer. Elizabeth supported Norris when he was questioned by the French royal family, and assured the French that he was acting in her name, and she and Cecil refused to recall Norris, even though he expressed a desire to return home. Also, Catherine accused Norris of helping the Huguenots, and Norris believed that he was being treated poorly by the French authorities because of his support for the Huguenots. Clearly, Norris was an active participant in diplomacy between England and France.

MacCaffrey also states that Elizabeth softened her words regarding her criticism

⁹⁶*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 51-52.*

⁹⁷MacCaffrey, 182.

of the French Catholic treatment of the Huguenots after a visit from a French envoy in August of 1568.⁹⁸ MacCaffrey does not mention, however, that the French government had sent this envoy, the Bishop of Rennes, in response to a message Elizabeth sent through Norris in support of the Huguenots, and this envoy questioned the authority of Norris. Further, after receiving this French envoy, Elizabeth confirmed her support for Norris and assured the French government that Norris's message criticizing the French Catholic treatment of the Huguenots did originate with her. Thus, contrary to MacCaffrey's assertions, Norris did play an active role in English diplomacy in France. Furthermore, the Bishop of Rennes, sent as an envoy from France to Elizabeth, did not persuade Elizabeth to stop supporting the Huguenots, as suggested by MacCaffrey.

⁹⁸Ibid., 182-183.

Chapter 4

Trouble in England

The third religious war in France began in the fall of 1568, and continued through 1569. Norris would continue to see threats to England from the Catholics in France, warning that if peace were made between the Huguenots and the French Catholics, the latter would turn their attention to England, in part because of the presence in England of the Scottish Queen Mary. Norris's worries would seem justified when some Northern Lords rebelled against Queen Elizabeth in late 1569, even though the government forces rapidly defeated them.

In France, the Catholics had dealt the Huguenots a horrible blow to their cause. In March of 1569, Catholic forces had killed the Prince of Condé, the Protestant leader, and there was great rejoicing in Paris and throughout France among Catholics upon hearing the news of Condé's death. The French Catholics continued to take actions against the Protestants, and even seemed to be emboldened by the death of Condé.

In the spring of 1569, King Charles IX of France released several edicts designed to aid in his fight against the Huguenots. On April 6, 1569, Charles issued a proclamation forbidding the practice of any religion other than the Catholic religion and ordered his officers to enforce this command.¹ He issued another proclamation in May commanding all gentlemen and soldiers to come to the camp of Anjou properly armed and equipped. He also required his officers to find those who disobeyed this order and to send them to the King for punishment.² King Charles issued a third proclamation on June 15, ordering that certain lands forfeited by Protestants should be sold at public auction.³ Thus the King was continuing the fight against the Huguenots in several ways,

¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 57.*

²*Ibid.*, 81.

³*Ibid.*, 88.

including militarily, but also by limiting their freedoms and taking their lands.

After Condé's death both sides in the French religious conflict continued to correspond with Queen Elizabeth of England, seeking her support. The Princess of Condé, widow of the slain Huguenot commander, wrote Elizabeth on April 12, to note that she was left with seven children and had been deprived of all her possessions. She asked Elizabeth to take her children into her protection.⁴ The Queen of Navarre also sent a letter to Elizabeth the next day requesting continued support in the war.⁵ The Duke of Anjou had also written Elizabeth to declare his victory at Jarnac and the death of Condé. Elizabeth wrote Anjou on April 17, and expressed her wishes that the bloodshed would allow the King to regain the obedience of his subjects. However, Elizabeth also lamented the bloodshed and worried that so much effort was made toward nourishing hatred rather than peace.⁶ Thus, Elizabeth apparently hoped that the death of Condé would cause the Huguenots to return to obedience to their King.

Norris wrote Cecil on April 18, to give his impression of the battle of Jarnac and the impact of the battle on the conflict, and he reported that the Huguenots had not been dissuaded from fighting by the death of their leader. He estimated that the loss on both sides was less than 400 men, though he was unable to ascertain which side had received the greatest loss. He also reported that the day following the battle Coligny had given the Catholic forces a skirmish. In contrast to the view of the French Catholics, Norris did not see the Battle of Jarnac as a great victory for the Catholics, but instead believed it was a draw, with the Protestant forces able to continue the fight the next day. Norris further stated that the King of Navarre had declared in camp that, although he lamented the death of Condé, the war was about religious liberty and maintaining the true religion, and stated that Condé had been determined to continue

⁴Ibid., 60.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., 63-64.

this fight.⁷ In Norris's view Huguenots were not too disheartened by the Battle of Jarnac, but were determined to continue fighting and perhaps even found inspiration in the fact that the Prince of Condé had been willing to die in their cause.

In this letter Norris also spoke about his servant that he believed had betrayed him, and had apparently helped the French Catholics. He reported that this servant, named Mitty, whom he had sent to Cecil, had instead decided to serve the Cardinal of Lorraine, and the Cardinal refused to return him to Norris.⁸ The manner in which Norris perceived this "betrayal," with his servant aiding the Cardinal of Lorraine, shows that Norris was coming to see himself as part of the Huguenot force and to see himself involved in the conflict with Lorraine as his enemy, just as the Huguenots saw Lorraine as the enemy.

In a letter to Cecil dated April 28, Norris repeated some of his earlier statements, worrying about an international Catholic conspiracy against England and encouraging an attempt for Calais. He indicated in this letter to Cecil that if the French royal forces defeated the Huguenots, Catholic countries would join together to invade England. Norris believed that peace should be sought with the King of Spain, stating that with the Cardinal of Lorraine ruling, France could not be friendly toward England. He even was opposed to a proposed marriage between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou, worrying that in negotiating the marriage England might neglect to prepare arms and be left vulnerable. He also suggested that all England needed to do to obtain Calais was to have some Noble make a demand for the former English possession.⁹ Norris had apparently grown to totally distrust the French government and other Catholic powers to even be suspicious of a possible marriage between Elizabeth and a French Catholic leader.

⁷Ibid., 64-65.

⁸Ibid., 65.

⁹Ibid., 66-67.

Norris continued to portray the Catholic actions in fighting the war as cruel to the Huguenots. The On May 9, Norris reported the death of a Count Brissac, whom the King mourned, but Norris did not share this sadness at his death, commenting that he “used great cruelty to those of the [Protestant] religion.”¹⁰ Norris also reported to his Queen on May 10, that a general for the Catholics was burning and wasting the country. He also commented that the Dukes of Savoy and Florence had sent letters of congratulations on the victory over Condé.¹¹ This Catholic desire to harm Protestants, according to Norris, was also shared by Catholics outside of France.

It appears Norris and his wife did not have all of their family with them, and perhaps had sent some of their children to England.¹² Lady Norris sent a letter to Cecil on May 13, to thank him not only for his letters but also for looking after her son. She noted that she understood he was like a father to her son.¹³ Thus, Norris and his wife had been so worried about their treatment that they had sent at least some of their children home.¹⁴

In a letter dated March 27, Norris described problems between Montmorency and the Cardinal of Lorraine, and portrayed the rivalry as evidence of the treachery of Lorraine. He stated that Lorraine was struck with fear when the King had left Paris but Montmorency came near with 500 mounted soldiers. Norris also stated that Lorraine had sent someone who claimed to be a Protestant spy to deliver letters, ostensibly from

¹⁰Ibid., 66-67.

¹¹Ibid., 70.

¹²Norris had previously referred to a tutor for his children on February 11, 1569. Ibid., 30.

¹³Ibid., 70.

¹⁴Norris and his wife had either five sons, G. B. Harrison, ed., *The Letters of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Cassell & Company, Ltd., 1935, 1968, 268, or six sons, A. L. Rowse, *The Expansion of Elizabethan England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), 348; O'Connor, 131-133, 151. Norris also had a daughter, Catherine, who apparently lived from 1540 to 1601. See “Le Cercle de Carteret, Person Sheet for Sir Henry Norris Lord Norreys,” <http://www.decarteret.org.uk/Database/PS04/PS04_120.HTM>, 30 May, 2002; see also O'Connor, 131.

the Prince of Navarre, stating the Montmorency should surprise the King to agitate the Parisians. The plot was discovered and Montmorency then went to the King to patch up any misunderstandings.¹⁵ Norris believed that Lorraine would try to eliminate the influence of Montmorency, who was sympathetic to the Huguenots.

Norris also continued to describe what he saw as cruelties against the Huguenots, portraying the war as an effort on the part of the French leadership to destroy the French Protestants, and also noted that the French were soliciting help from abroad. Norris told Cecil on May 27, that there were “great outrages and cruelties used to them of the [Protestant] religion” at Paris and Bordeaux.¹⁶ Norris reported that the Cardinal had plans to sell the possessions of French Protestants to raise an army from peasants. He also stated that King Charles had vowed not to rest in Paris until all of the Protestants in France had been ruined. Norris noted that *reiters* (unstated but apparently fighting on behalf of the Huguenots) had burned 150 villages in Burgundy which did not worry the Cardinal of Lorraine, who claimed that the villages would soon be rebuilt at the expense of the Protestants. Norris also reported that an army was coming from Italy, and any hope for peace was being lost.¹⁷ Thus Norris saw both the French Catholics and Catholics from abroad as out to destroy the Huguenots, with the Cardinal of Lorraine so intent on harming the Huguenots that he did not care if Catholic subjects were also harmed in the process.

The French King continued to contact Elizabeth through his ambassador. On May 30, the French ambassador, de la Mothe Fénélon, requested that Elizabeth prevent her subjects from trading in Rochelle.¹⁸ The English sent a response on June 1, and stated that there were negotiations for the return of goods confiscated by France and by England from the other country. The English claimed that there were English

¹⁵*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 78.*

¹⁶*Ibid., 78.*

¹⁷*Ibid., 78-79.*

¹⁸*Ibid., 80.*

goods being seized daily in France.¹⁹ Norris would increasingly become more involved in these problems.

On June 3, Norris reported to Cecil about the plight of English merchants in France. He stated that the French were treating English merchants with “[g]reat extremity,” apparently taking their goods.²⁰ Thus, not only were the English and Norris worried about the French civil war because of what they saw as Catholic mistreatment of Protestants, but the French government was apparently impeding English trade.

In this letter to Cecil, and one the same day to Elizabeth, Norris reported on a dispute between the Duke of Anjou and the Cardinal of Lorraine, continuing to paint the Cardinal as a villain. Norris gave greater detail to Elizabeth, stating that the Queen Mother had received letters from her son, Anjou, complaining that Lorraine had sent money to his brother which should have been delivered as payment for Catholic mercenaries. As a result some German Protestants that the French Catholics should have stopped had able to continue, apparently to aid the Huguenots.²¹ Norris reported to Elizabeth and to Cecil that the Queen Mother journeyed to where Anjou was to repair the quarrel.²² The French King became angry because the German Protestants were allowed to pass, having received a letter from the Holy Roman Emperor about this problem, and Norris stated that the King blamed both Lorraine and Lorraine’s brother.²³ Norris, however, put the blame for problems among the French Catholics on Lorraine. On June 7, Norris told Cecil that the Cardinal had tried to put the blame on another Catholic leader when his brother had lost the town of La Charité to the Protestants.²⁴ Norris did not believe Lorraine was honorable, even with other Catholics.

¹⁹Ibid., 82.

²⁰Ibid., 84.

²¹Ibid., 83.

²²Ibid., 83-84.

²³Ibid., 83.

²⁴Ibid., 85.

In addition to the disputes between Catholic leaders, Norris continued to see problems for the Huguenots. Norris told Cecil on June 3, that the French King was raising a new army. Also, perhaps worse, Norris stated to the Secretary that the Pope would interdict in England, and give the country to Anjou. Norris also stated that great persecution was continuing against the Protestants, stating that a M. De Lisle, who was a member of the King's privy council and president of Brittany, had been arrested and treated poorly.²⁵ Norris reported to Cecil on June 8, that the Duke of Anjou and his forces were trying, by conjecture, to determine the plans of the Huguenots, and Anjou's forces were worried about Germans joining the forces of the prince of Navarre.²⁶ On June 14, Norris wrote Cecil to tell him that the Queen Mother had gone to the military camp to encourage the "French nation" to fight. He also described what he likely saw as injustice on the Catholic side, by reporting that the Cardinal of Bourbon was requesting that the King send him the children of the Prince of Condé, "promising to bring them up in the Roman religion."²⁷ Norris continued to believe that the Catholics were acting cruelly toward the Huguenots.

He also reported events in France that would have a direct impact on England. On June 7, Norris stated to Cecil that there were English Catholics who were writing horrible letters against Elizabeth, Cecil and their country.²⁸ Norris wrote Cecil on June 30, and described what he saw as more danger for England. He told the Secretary that he had learned, apparently a year earlier, from intercepted letters, and through Coligny that the Cardinal of Lorraine had promised to the Duke of Anjou that he would arrange

²⁵Ibid., 84.

²⁶Ibid., 86.

²⁷Ibid., 88. It is not clear where the children of Condé were at this time. The Catholic forces had captured Condé's children at the Battle of St. Denis in November of 1567. *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1566-68*, 370. However, the widow of Condé had written Elizabeth in April of 1569, to ask her to give protection to her children. *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 60.

²⁸Ibid., 85-86.

for the Queen of Scots to be brought to France where she would yield her estates of England and France to Anjou. He had also learned that the Pope would give these realms to Anjou. Norris also stated that he had heard that a nobleman from the King of Spain was to be sent to the Duke of Alva, and then would go into England.²⁹ Thus, Norris continued to see threats to England from forces in France, and also saw an international Catholic conspiracy, believing Spain might also become involved against England.

In July, Norris warned London of what he saw as an international Catholic threat against Protestants and England, and used this perceived danger as a reason for action in favor of the Huguenots. On July 4, Norris told Cecil that there was great preparation being made by the Kings of France, Spain and Portugal to attack the English navy, and that these countries would try to assuage Elizabeth with fair words while their navy was made ready and they worked for the ruin of Protestants in France. He stated that Lorraine had declared openly that he had received promises of aid if he made an attempt against England. For this reason Norris believed that it was imperative for Elizabeth to help those of the Protestant religion.³⁰ Thus Norris hoped to keep Elizabeth on the side of the Huguenots by repeating the threats against England from a Catholic league.

Norris also reported to Cecil in this letter the hardships faced by the Huguenots. Norris saw as cruel the fact that the French King, in order to increase his army, had permitted peasants to take up arms, stating that the King “thereby put the sword in the madman’s hands, who leaves no execrable act uncommitted to them that travel now in this country.”³¹ This statement shows Norris’s fear of the peasant class, which was likely shared by others of higher social standing, including the French King, but also

²⁹Ibid., 91-92.

³⁰Ibid., 92.

³¹Ibid.

shows that the King was desperate to increase his forces. He also stated that “the cruelty was never so great,” for the Protestants, claiming that Huguenots were not only being harshly imprisoned, but soldiers “take it for a pastime to shoot” at prisoners in the prison window and three men had been killed by harquebus shot.³² Norris seemed to find persecution of Huguenots in any event and emphasized it in his letters to London.

On July 9, Norris told Cecil of more plotting by Spain and the Pope. He told the Secretary that the Pope’s Nuncio and King Philip of Spain had sent a Duke de la Negeres to the French court to try to arrange a marriage between the King and the emperor’s second daughter and between the King of Portugal and the Princess Margaret.³³ Norris stated that the Pope’s Nuncio had also come to persuade the French leadership not to make peace. According to Norris the Duke of Anjou had been trying to get his brother, the King, to consider a peace due to the condition of his army, which was suffering from famine and sickness. Norris also reported that Anjou’s army was scattered and that Anjou had requested the King’s aid in trying to get French “gendarmes” to return to camp or he would be left with only foreigners.³⁴ The alleged interference by Spain and Rome reflects Norris’s long-standing assertion that the war was supported by Catholics outside of France, even though, according to Norris, the French Catholic army was beset by problems, and the leader of the forces, Anjou, was ready for peace.

On July 18, Norris continued to speak of what he saw as the better character of the Huguenot troops, as well as underhanded dealing by Catholics toward the Protestants and continued plotting in France to aid Queen Mary. He stated that a M. De Sansac, a Catholic leader who was besieging La Charité with 300 troops, “very ignominiously left the siege,” when he learned that Huguenot troops were

³²Ibid.

³³Margaret later married Henry of Navarre. See Holt, 81.

³⁴*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 94-95.*

approaching.³⁵ He also noted that the troops of Anjou were dispersing, but did acknowledge that the army of the King was preparing to march by the end of August and was more united than before. Norris reported what he saw as treachery by stating that an unnamed person had dispatched a foreign agent to poison Coligny. Norris also told of a printer named Étienne, who, along with two servants of the Cardinal of Lorraine, had stated that Mary, Queen of Scots, would not leave England until she became its Queen.³⁶ Norris saw things in black and white, with the Catholics always looking for ways to destroy the Protestants, but acting cowardly in battle.

On July 22, Robert Huggins, a friend of Norris who had not written to Norris in nine years, addressed a letter from Madrid to the ambassador in France, speaking to him of enemies of Elizabeth in England. He related that “[s]ome unfaithful subjects of the Queen” were attempting to bring a foreign army into England and apparently were writing the Spanish King about their designs. He also stated that the Spanish King was preparing men and arms to go to France to aid the French King.³⁷ This letter would likely serve to strengthen Norris’s worries about threats from nations other than France to England and about subjects disloyal to Elizabeth.

Norris wrote Cecil again on July 27, to continue to tell him about what he believed were great problems facing the Catholic forces in France. He stated that the army of a M. Sansac, which fled from La Charité, had suffered great losses and the camp of Anjou was “almost broken.” Norris reported that despite these problems, however, the French Catholic forces were awaiting foreign aid, including a promise of 4000 Polish soldiers. However, Norris found that the presence of foreigners in the Catholic armies created further problems, stating that payments to foreign troops came before those to French soldiers, causing discontent and desertion. However, Norris

³⁵Ibid., 96.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid., 98-99.

noted that the King was able to daily increase his own forces, and the Cardinal of Lorraine was telling the French Monarch that they had all the forces they needed to ruin all the Huguenots.³⁸ Although Norris believed that at least a portion of the French Catholic forces were in disarray, he still found there were reasons to worry about as far as the Huguenots and the English were concerned.

Norris also reported problems for the Huguenots and for England. Norris stated that the Parlement of Paris³⁹ had ordered the executions of several Huguenots and had published an attainder or arrest warrant for Coligny.⁴⁰ Norris claimed in this letter that the Cardinal of Lorraine had sent two servants, whom Norris described as a redhead and an Italian, to England and warned Cecil to watch for the Queen's safety, as well as his own, and promised to send more information.⁴¹ In addition to the war, Norris believed there were other problems for the Huguenots and for the English.

Norris wrote Cecil on July 29 with news about Catholic aid from abroad and problems facing the Catholic armies. Norris reported that the Duke of Alva had sent forces to aid the French Catholics and a Count St. Fiorehas had sent words to discourage peace and encourage war. The French King was gaining money for the war effort from Parisians but counselors had advised him to annex confiscated Huguenot land to the crown. Norris also stated that he had responded to a charge from the French ambassador that he possessed knowledge of the military plans of the Huguenots, denying to the ambassador that he knew of these plans, and stated that no one could show that he had written anything to Coligny or his men.⁴² Thus, although

³⁸Ibid., 102.

³⁹The Parlement of Paris was not a legislative body, but was instead the "supreme sovereign court" in France. Holt, 10.

⁴⁰In the summer of 1569, the *Parlement* of Paris convicted Coligny of *lese-majesté*, and since he was not there to receive his sentence, Parisians hung him in effigy. Diefendorf., 1086.

⁴¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 102.

⁴²Ibid., 103-104.

Norris strongly favored the Huguenots, he denied any active involvement in their struggle, and there is no evidence that he was aware of their military plans.

The Huguenots continued to make military inroads against the Catholics in France, according to Norris, and the Catholic forces were struggling. Norris told Elizabeth on August 5, 1569, that Anjou, augmented by Italian foot soldiers, was defending the city of Poitiers against Protestant forces led by Coligny, but had also needed reinforcements from the King to defend against Protestant attack. Norris also reported that the King and Parliament had seized property of those fighting against the King, some of which they had sold. Despite the money raised by this, Norris reported that the King had been obliged to borrow money and tax heavily, and that the Cardinals of Bourbon and Lorraine had sold rent from monasteries. Also, while the King was awaiting further reinforcements of foreign mercenaries Coligny was fortifying the places his forces had occupied and Norris made sure to point out that Coligny's forces were in good order.⁴³ Norris considered the Huguenots to be well organized and the Catholic forces to be in want of funds and men and to be in disarray.

Norris also believed the King was providing poor leadership for his forces. Norris wrote a letter to Cecil on August 5, and reported that the citizens of Paris (who were mostly ardent Catholics) were giving the King a list of persons to be admitted to the Privy Council and had also given names of persons who should be imprisoned, prompting Norris to remark that "they seem[ed] rather to give order to the King than to be directed by his Government."⁴⁴ He also saw the weak King as benign, stating that while the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Queen Mother were away the King had discharged a captain in Paris for disorders and cruelties, but when the Queen Mother and Lorraine returned the captain was reinstated and was more cruel than before.

⁴³Ibid., 107-108.

⁴⁴Ibid., 108-109.

Norris stated that “it seem[ed] there [was] no King but the Cardinal.”⁴⁵ This continued Norris’s theme of disarray on the Catholic side, and he also portrayed the King as weak but not totally evil.

Norris wrote Cecil later in the month with news about a possible marriage between representatives of the Catholics and Huguenots. He told the Secretary on August 11, that the King, Queen Mother and Lorraine had sent messengers with letters of credit to the Queen of Navarre to try to get her to lay down arms, by offering her, among other things, a marriage between her son Henry and the Princess Margaret.⁴⁶ Norris would have likely been suspicious at any Catholic attempt to get the Huguenots to lay down their arms.

In this letter Norris also commented about a rebellion taking place against Elizabeth. Norris expressed relief for Elizabeth’s victory over rebels in Ireland, and stated that he believed Lorraine’s helping hand had been there, as he had promised to interfere there in “open council.”⁴⁷ In fact there were two rebellions in Elizabeth’s dominions. In June, 1569, the Fitzmaurice rebellion commenced in Ireland, and an English force led by Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Nicholas Malby subdued Irish forces which had assaulted Traghton Abbey.⁴⁸ It was likely this successful defense against rebels to which Norris was referring. However, the Fitzmaurice rebellion in Ireland continued through 1573.⁴⁹ This rebellion would make Norris and the English even more wary of Lorraine.

In a second letter to Cecil dated August 11, Norris reported that Robert Étienne,

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., 110.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸William Palmer, *The Problem of Ireland in Tudor Foreign Policy: 1485-1603* (Woodbridge, England: The Boydell Press, 1994), 92.

⁴⁹Anne Somerset, *Elizabeth I* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 524. Fighting under Elizabeth to completely subdue Ireland was not completed until 1603. See Palmer, 136-137.

the King's printer, who had been forced to leave France because of his religion, wanted Norris to present to Elizabeth his last work as printer as a token of the service he owed her as chief patroness of the Protestant faith.⁵⁰ Thus although there was a possible peace being negotiated, and a marriage to join Protestant and Catholic, Norris still saw persecution of Huguenots.

Norris reported to Elizabeth on August 28, that an attempt at peace had failed because of what he saw as Catholic duplicity, and hoped the Huguenots would have success in battle. Norris stated that a motion for peace had "vanished away," as Coligny had learned by experience that treaties by the French government were only made to give them more time to gain an advantage over the Huguenots. Instead, Norris reported that Coligny was continuing his attempt at Poitiers, which Norris, believed was important because in taking it Coligny would gain territory from the House of Guise, as well as wealth and ransoms, but if he lost the men and supplies expended in the futile attempt would be very harmful to the Huguenot cause.⁵¹ Perhaps because of this importance, Norris reported extensively on the attempt to take Poitiers.

Norris also continued to relate what he saw as Catholic cruelty to Huguenots, but looked the other way if Protestants mistreated Catholics. He stated that in Orleans Catholics had burned thirty Protestant prisoners in a house and had cruelly slaughtered fifty others and threw them in the river. Norris also reported what could have been considered as cruelty on the part of the Huguenots, but he did not describe it as such. He related that the Protestants had captured a M. Bonnivet, whom the King had sent to Poitiers, and after his captors brought him before the Prince of Navarre and the new Prince of Condé, the Huguenots before Bonnivet's eyes beheaded two of his men who had previously been Protestant, and also hanged two Italians. Moreover, in relating that military gains by the Protestants, Norris only reported that they spoiled the King's

⁵⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 110.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 117-118.

house at Fountainbleau, but did not mention how they had treated Catholics.⁵² To Norris the killings on the part of Protestants were a necessary part of fighting a war, but when done by Catholics they were evidence of persecution.

Norris wrote Elizabeth on September 10, and continued to focus on the siege of Poitiers. He stated that Coligny had gained a tower at Poitiers and kept the defenders in the city for sixteen days, requiring them to eat horse meat. Had this been done by Catholics instead of Protestants, he might have characterized this action as cruelty, but here Norris simply reported it as part of the war. Norris also noted that Anjou took men to make an assault on the Protestant stronghold of Châtelherault, and Norris made sure to tell Elizabeth the numbers of the foreign troops in Anjou's army, which he stated were from Italy, Belgium and Switzerland. Although Coligny was forced to take infantry and Cavalry from Poitiers to protect Châtelherault, Norris reported that Coligny was able to keep up the siege at Poitiers.⁵³ However, Anjou had written his brother, King Charles, to state that his attempt on Châtelherault had caused the siege at Poitiers to be lifted.⁵⁴ Clearly Norris agreed that the possession of Poitiers was of utmost importance, and made sure he emphasized Protestant successes there.

Norris wrote both Cecil and Leicester a day later, on September 11, to state that he understood there were still sufficient forces surrounding Poitiers, but also gave news to Cecil regarding the treatment of Huguenots elsewhere in France.⁵⁵ He reported that at Orleans all the Huguenots were to be required to leave the city. At the end of the letter he requested Cecil to remember the cause of Coligny.⁵⁶ Thus, while emphasizing Protestant successes, Norris wanted to be sure to report what he saw as unfair treatment of Huguenots.

⁵²Ibid., 118.

⁵³Ibid., 122-123.

⁵⁴Ibid., 122.

⁵⁵Ibid., 123, 124.

⁵⁶Ibid., 123.

Norris continued to try to emphasize positive developments for the Huguenots, and mistreatment at the hand of the French government. By September 18, Norris was reporting to Cecil that the siege of Poitiers had been lifted, and gave as a cause the lack of money on both sides.⁵⁷ The siege of Poitiers had lasted from July 25 to September 7, 1569.⁵⁸ Norris noted a few days later to Cecil that the French King had issued a proclamation for all gentlemen and footmen to report to their units for duty. However, Norris noted that he had heard of a beginning of some Protestant uprising in Auvergne, stating that they had taken a small town called Aurillac.⁵⁹ In a subsequent letter a few days later Norris told Cecil of other areas where there were movements on behalf of the Huguenots and where they had taken towns, such as Brittany, Normandy and Picardy. Norris also mentioned problems for Coligny, stating that the French government had given his office of Admiral to someone else, and the Protestants had discovered and captured certain persons who had planned on poisoning Coligny.⁶⁰ While the Protestants could succeed in a fair fight, in Norris eyes, he believed the Catholics were acting in underhanded ways.

Norris also discussed perceived problems facing his own country, both from within and without. He stated that he understood the Spanish had plans to give aid to rebels in Ireland. He also stated that he had learned of “sundry strange bruits (noises) of England,” which he hoped were not true, but did not specify any further.⁶¹ Norris was still concerned about foreign Catholics causing problems in Britain.

In early October Norris was reporting to Elizabeth and Cecil about a great loss for the Protestants. He noted that at Moncontour Anjou had defeated the Admiral and gained his artillery and baggage, and Norris expressed sorrow to Cecil concerning the

⁵⁷Ibid., 124.

⁵⁸Thompson, 385.

⁵⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 125.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

defeat.⁶² In contrast, Elizabeth, upon learning of the Catholic victory later in October, sent letters to both the French King and the Queen Mother to state that she had “great pleasure” in hearing of the Catholic Victory and offered her services to “assuage the evils” connected to the civil war.⁶³ Thus, at least ostensibly, Elizabeth did not share in Norris’s sorrow in the Protestant defeat, although she may have simply been trying to keep on good terms with the French royalty. In his letter in early October to Elizabeth Norris reported that he had advised the King that with this victory he should have compassion for his defeated subjects, whom Norris said would return to obeying the King if he were merciful. According to Norris, however, the King stubbornly meant to keep pursuing the Protestants.⁶⁴ Norris apparently acted as an advocate for the Huguenots, in contrast to his Queen, who seemed more concerned about her relationship with the French leaders.

Norris wrote a letter addressed to both Leicester and Cecil on October 10, which, in addition to giving more details about the battle of Moncontour, listed what he saw as further attacks against the Protestants which were not really of a military nature. He stated that the Parisians had promised 50,000 crowns to the person that would murder Coligny.⁶⁵ Norris also stated that there was a plot among the Catholic army whereby a group of six soldiers would choose a high ranking man from Coligny’s army to kill.⁶⁶ Thus Norris continued to portray some of the Catholic military tactics as underhanded, but never seemed to make the same conclusions about Huguenot actions.

Norris continued to show this bias in early November when he wrote both Cecil and Elizabeth after the Catholic attempt to gain a town called St. Jean D’Angely. He reported that the Huguenot commander, Captain Piles, refused to render the town after

⁶²Ibid., 128, 129.

⁶³Ibid., 139.

⁶⁴Ibid., 128.

⁶⁵Ibid., 130

⁶⁶Ibid.

attacks from Anjou, and when the governor of the town appeared to be ready to surrender the town to the Catholics, Captain Piles “openly hanged him and cast his body into the river.”⁶⁷ Norris did not seem bothered by this at all, as he might have been had this happened to someone favoring the Huguenots. However, in this same letter to the Queen, Norris noted that Coligny had to stave off a mutiny by his reiters.⁶⁸ To Norris, the Huguenots were justified in taking actions, even harsh measures, against those who challenged the authority of Protestant leaders, while he seemed to often find a reason to criticize Catholic actions.

Norris also reported developments that would directly affect the English. Norris noted to both Elizabeth and Cecil that he had obtained the release of some English ships held at Bordeaux. He also reported to Cecil that he had heard of trouble among the nobility in England, with the Duke of Norfolk and others, which caused some of the French to rejoice.⁶⁹ Thomas Howard, the Duke of Norfolk, had publicized his desire to wed Mary, Queen of Scots, and after gaining some support in the privy council, lost the support of Elizabeth. Norfolk then left for his home in the North where he apparently considered rebellion, but decided to return to court and was placed in the tower.⁷⁰ Norris would likely continue to worry that French Catholics would go to England to aid a rebellion there, and rebellion in Northern England was not yet completed.

Norris believed that foreign aid to the French government was helping to prolong the war. Norris noted to Elizabeth in early November that the French King was obtaining foreign reinforcements, but would be unable to take Rochelle and that the war would thus continue in the Spring.⁷¹ The Huguenots, according to Norris in a letter in

⁶⁷Ibid., 141. Later in the month Norris would note to the Queen that Captain Piles had refused to yield up the city unless there was a general peace. Ibid., 146.

⁶⁸Ibid., 141.

⁶⁹Ibid., 141-142.

⁷⁰Somerset, 226-230.

⁷¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 141.

late November to Elizabeth, were also hoping to receive reinforcements from Germany. Despite these preparations for war, Norris reported that there had been some dealing for peace.⁷² Despite his previous statements about how the Huguenot army was more organized and the Huguenot successes he had emphasized, Norris reported to Cecil on December 10, that unless Coligny received assistance, the Protestants in France would be ruined, and he encouraged the Secretary to continue to give aid.⁷³ Thus despite some attempts at peace, Norris did not believe there was yet an end to the war, and believed the Huguenots were in need of aid to counterbalance outside help for the Catholics.

In addition to worrying about the fate of the Huguenots, Norris was concerned about French efforts to interfere in Britain. In his letter of December 10 to Cecil, Norris stated that if there were peace in France, the Cardinal of Lorraine would try to send forces to Scotland. Norris stated that the Cardinal had already sent a spy into England and one into Scotland to inform him of events there.⁷⁴ Later in December Norris stated that Lorraine would use a break from war for three months to send forces into England.⁷⁵ Norris also reported on December 10, that the French King was wanting to send ships into Scotland to restore Mary to her throne there.⁷⁶ King Charles was also trying to help Mary through diplomatic means, sending a representative to Elizabeth to request her to set Mary at liberty and help her recover her kingdom.⁷⁷ Norris was worried that a break in the war in France could lead to further troubles in England, although it would appear he had little to fear from the French King.

On December 19, in correspondence to Cecil, Norris related that although there

⁷²Ibid., 146.

⁷³Ibid., 149.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid., 153.

⁷⁶Ibid., 149.

⁷⁷Ibid., 157.

were those in Orleans who were attempting to make peace, some Catholics in that city had recently murdered eighty or so Protestants in prison whom Norris claimed had not taken up arms or otherwise offended the King. Also, Norris reported that at Paris the inhabitants had hanged in effigy the Vidame of Chartres and a M. Montgomery, apparently two Huguenots.⁷⁸ Norris believed the Catholics were taking actions against the Huguenots which were not justified by the war.

Norris was also learning about the Northern rebellion. In November, 1569, after Elizabeth had summoned them to court in an effort to forestall any problems, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland had, along with the Sheriff of Yorkshire, rode into Durham with 300 armed men and later issued a proclamation stating they were obliged to take arms to rectify evil laws enacted by the Queen's counselors. The North had grudgingly accepted the Protestant settlement of England, and the Earls sought to tie their rebellion to religion, and the area saw some religious disturbances. In response Elizabeth had Mary moved further South, which prevented the rebels from capturing the Scottish Queen, who might have provided them with more legitimacy. As it was, by December the leaders of the rebellion had been forced to flee into Scotland, and their followers, mostly poor country men, were abandoned.⁷⁹ In addition to noting some of the events in the war in France, Norris also told Cecil that the French Ambassador's secretary had stated that the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland had revolted and that the secretary had been to a conference with the Queen of Scots, and Norris wanted to know the truth of these matters.⁸⁰ In his next letter to Cecil on December 22, Norris reported that he had received correspondence from Cecil reporting the rebellion of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland. Norris took these events to again ask to be recalled to be able to serve Elizabeth in England. He also noted that William

⁷⁸Ibid., 151.

⁷⁹Somerset, 232-236.

⁸⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 151.

Norris, his son, had returned to England to be employed in her majesty's service.⁸¹

Norris was very worried about the rebellion in England.

Norris began the new year continuing to talk about the rebellion against his Queen. He told Cecil on January 2, 1570, that he had learned of an agreement sent from some unnamed person in England to the French King, apparently to help in a rebellion against Elizabeth, and also stated that in both England and France there were people that would threaten the Queen and the "quiet of England."⁸² Norris also claimed that in France there was talk of peace in the religious war, or at least a respite from fighting, but that Lorraine would use the lull in fighting to try to send men to England to help rebels there as well and to help Queen Mary become Queen of England, and that there would likely be help in this endeavor from Spain.⁸³ Thus, the Catholic conspiracy against England, about which Norris had warned for some time, was, in his eyes, beginning to come to pass.

Norris wrote more about a possible peace in France. He reported to Cecil on January 2, that certain *sieurs* that were Protestant leaders had sent a letter to the French King requesting that he establish free exercise of religion and set nobles and other in possession of their property. The King replied "in general terms" that he wanted his subjects to be able to live in rest and safety of their lives and property.⁸⁴ This was an apparent effort at peace, but it would still take some time to reach the end of this war.

Queen Elizabeth wrote Norris on January 5, with the good news that she had suppressed the rebellion of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, and she instructed Norris to inform the French King of her success. Elizabeth reported that the rebels stated that they expected help from France and Flanders, and that as a result,

⁸¹Ibid., 153.

⁸²Ibid., 164.

⁸³Ibid., 164-165.

⁸⁴Ibid., 165.

she resolved to strengthen the defenses of her realm but wanted Norris to assure King Charles that she was only arming for defense.⁸⁵ Elizabeth apparently confirmed Norris's fears of continental aid to the rebellion in England.

Norris wrote the Queen on January 27, apparently before he had received her letter from earlier in the month about the suppression of the Northern rebellion, and Norris discussed events in France, reporting what he saw as underhanded actions by the French Catholics and their obstacles to peace. Norris reported that there were rumors that peace was being made, but stated that this "feigned hypocrisy was revealed" by a letter the Queen Mother had sent to the Governor of Bordeaux, which Huguenots had intercepted, and this letter informed the Governor that there would be no peace despite the rumors. Norris also stated that someone had sent three men from Cologne to seek "by all means possible" the death of the King of Navarre, the Prince of Condé and the Admiral Coligny.⁸⁶ To Norris the French Catholics were continually deceitfully seeking to harm the Huguenots.

He also found that the French Catholics were trying to give financial aid to the rebels in England. Norris noted the difficulty which both Coligny and the French King had in paying their mercenaries. Despite these financial difficulties, Norris informed Elizabeth that he had learned from a commissioner sent by the Queen of Navarre that a Ranabouille, apparently a representative Anjou, had been commanded to assure the rebels in England of money and munitions. When the representatives of the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé expressed their desire to serve the French King, Anjou wanted to know if they would assist him in conquering England, which they refused to do, despite the fact they were promised peace and a recognition of articles protecting their religion if they agreed to assist Anjou in this endeavor. The Huguenot representatives also refused to make peace because they doubted the sincerity of the

⁸⁵Ibid., 167.

⁸⁶Ibid., 174.

Queen Mother and were stronger than their enemies believed. They also noted, according to Norris, that the Queen Mother had given a response to them that they would not enjoy the exercise of religion. The ambassador also stated the Cardinal of Lorraine had prepared six ships and 3000 harquebussiers to invade England in the Spring.⁸⁷ Norris wanted Elizabeth to believe that the Huguenots were true friends of England, and would not hurt its interests, even if it benefited them, while there were those among the French Catholics who looked for opportunities to strike against England.

Norris wrote Cecil on January 27, and told of more threats against England from France. The French, according to Norris, were planning on declaring to Elizabeth that unless she gave liberty to Mary and permitted Catholic Mass in England, the Pope and the Kings of France and Spain would force her to do so. He stated that these plans to invade England would come to pass if there were peace in France, which Norris thought was not close.⁸⁸ Norris continued to believe French Catholics were prepared to invade England.

Norris wrote Elizabeth on February 5, to report that he had received her January 5 letter, but noted that he had met only with the Queen Mother since he was unable to meet with the French King. Norris reported that he had spoken to Catherine de Medici of Elizabeth's success in suppressing the rebels. The Queen Mother expressed her happiness at Elizabeth's success, and denied that her son the King had promised them any aid. However, the Queen Mother told Norris that this rebellion was a warning that she should not aid rebels in fighting against their leaders, and if she ignored this warning worse things could happen. Norris then denied that Elizabeth had helped the Huguenots.⁸⁹ This denial was part of the English strategy, as the English tried to ensure

⁸⁷Ibid., 174-175.

⁸⁸Ibid., 175-176.

⁸⁹Ibid., 181.

that their aid to the Huguenots could be “convincingly denied.”⁹⁰ Their denials did not always convince the French authorities, however, as noted below.

Norris reported that the Queen Mother then turned their conversation to Mary, Queen of Scots, and stated that the French King would use all his forces to help Mary recover her estate.⁹¹ Norris reported to Elizabeth that he had learned that the Cardinal of Lorraine had many ships at various locations ready to go into England and stated that only if Elizabeth were prepared for their arrival would they not leave. Norris also stated that during the lull in the fighting the Catholics were trying to recruit new mercenaries, and Norris stated that he feared that the Huguenots would have to yield to peace unless they received some aid.⁹² Norris was thus using the possible threat of invasion to England to try to get Elizabeth prepared to fight, but also again told her that the Huguenots were in need of aid.

Norris also wrote Cecil on this same day and continued to speak of a threat of a French invasion of England. Norris stated that Lorraine believed that if he could land troops in Scotland or England he would find men there to aid him. Norris also surmised that the root of the Northern rebellion could be traced to Flanders of France. He also told Cecil of what he had heard about the Cardinal of Lorraine’s preparations against England and how the Duke of Anjou had allegedly offered benefits to the Huguenots if they would aid him against England.⁹³ The rebellion in England had been to Norris a fulfillment of his worries about French intervention in England.

A few days later, Norris related to Elizabeth further charges from the Queen Mother that the English Queen was helping the Huguenots. Catherine had told Norris

⁹⁰Trim, 189-190.

⁹¹The French government would maintain a close relationship with Mary through the French ambassador in England, de la Mothe Fénélon, and the ambassador would also make requests, “albeit feebly,” on Mary’s behalf. Jensen, 41.

⁹²*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 181-182.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 182.

that the King had learned that Elizabeth had sent money to help pay for mercenaries and the Queen Mother demanded to know whether Elizabeth was a friend or foe. Catherine also stated that she had learned that English merchants were helping to supply shoes, horses and other thing to the Huguenots, at greater levels than they had done before, and that she knew Elizabeth had previously supplied artillery. Norris denied that Elizabeth was involved and warned Catherine against believing rumors, but Catherine persisted in her assertions and made some threats against England.⁹⁴ On this occasion, the English aid to the Huguenots could not be plausibly denied.

Norris told Cecil on February 9, that some in France were talking about an invasion of England, but only after peace in France, which Norris still believed was a long way off. He added that if the French followed through on this enterprise, the English would then learn to forget “great hosen and gay apparel, and learn to defend God’s cause, their Queen and country.”⁹⁵ Thus Norris believed there was not support in England to aid the Protestants in France and that the English had become too soft, and needed to become more serious about outside threats. Norris wrote Cecil on February 17, and stated that the Queen of Navarre was not content with the two towns the French King had promised her, and that the Huguenots had intercepted a packet of the King and learned of some of the things the King was planning to do against them. With these comments, Norris not surprisingly stated that peace would not soon be concluded.⁹⁶ Norris believed the actions of the French Catholics were obstacles to peace.

On February 23, Elizabeth sent Norris instructions to give to the French King and Queen Mother in response to requests they had sent her. The French royal family had sent Elizabeth a request to treat Mary well, set her free, and help her to regain her

⁹⁴Ibid., 183-184. The power of the Queen Mother in relation to King Charles is again shown, by the fact that Catherine stated that until this time she had kept from Charles the fact that the English were aiding the Huguenots. Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid., 186-187.

realm. Elizabeth responded that she had always treated Mary well but refused to set her free and help her regain her Kingdom. Elizabeth told Norris to explain that it would be dangerous to help her regain her realm as rebels had used Mary's name to challenge Elizabeth's Kingdom and crown, and Mary also had dealings with Englishmen and foreigners which could harm Elizabeth. Elizabeth also instructed Norris to tell the King that she would be glad to help mediate a peace between him and his subjects. Elizabeth also wanted Norris to tell King Charles that she had not directed or licensed any of her subjects to carry arms or munitions to Rochelle, but generally she allowed her merchants to go wherever they wanted in France. Elizabeth also told Norris to state that she had made no levy of soldiers in Germany, but could speedily do so, and she stated that she planned to prepare a land and naval force, but the King should not worry about these forces.⁹⁷ Elizabeth wanted Norris to try to assure the French King that she would not attack him or support those he viewed as rebels, even though she had actually already done the latter.

Norris continued to believe there were threats to England's safety in France. He reported to Cecil in late February, 1570, that he had discovered someone who written a false treatise against Elizabeth, but the Queen Mother refused Norris's requests to punish the author. Norris also accused Lorraine of being behind the murder of the Protestant Earl of Murray⁹⁸ of Scotland, whose death caused joy in France, in part because it could lead to more problems for England. Norris also accused Lorraine of conspiring to help Mary obtain the crown of England with the help of English Catholics.⁹⁹

⁹⁷Ibid., 190-191. Queen Elizabeth I, to Sir Henry Norris, Ambassador in France, 23 February, 1570. Reprinted in Harrison, 68-82.

⁹⁸James Stewart, Earl of Murray or Moray, was the illegitimate son of James V, of Scotland, was a leader of the Protestants who took control of the government in Scotland after the ouster of Mary, and was a regent for the child James VI, later James I, of England. Murray was assassinated in January, 1570. Wernham, 248, 302-304, 306.

⁹⁹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 193.

For Norris France was a hotbed of anti-English sentiment, and he was particularly concerned about the Cardinal of Lorraine.

Norris was hoping for an end of the religious conflict and an end to his ambassadorship. He told Cecil that there was a negotiation for peace taking place as the emperor refused to allow the French King to marry his daughter until peace was concluded. He also mentioned that Cecil had talked about Norris being recalled as ambassador, and had listed two possible successors, while Norris recommended Henry Killigrew as his successor.¹⁰⁰ Norris was hoping that the time was soon coming for his to return to England.

Norris continued to worry about help from France for Mary. Norris wrote Cecil at the beginning of March to warn about danger to Elizabeth from Lorraine. He stated that it would be better if Mary were out of England as Lorraine was planning some type of mischief with English Catholics.¹⁰¹ Norris told Cecil on March 9, that he had learned of more plans to help Mary. He stated that the King had sent someone to declare his intention of aiding Mary's supporters in Scotland and there were ships that had supposedly been dispatched to help Mary. Also Norris told of someone "who ha[d] but one eye and a cut over the face" who was being sent to work against Elizabeth.¹⁰² Norris wrote Cecil on March 16, to recommend, because of the danger Elizabeth had been in since Mary had arrived in England, to somehow allow her to "escape." Norris also showed that he still saw danger in other Catholic countries, wondering whether Spain, since it had just won a victory over the Moors at Galera, might use its army in Scotland. He further stated that the Kings of France and Spain had agreed to inform

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 196-197.

¹⁰²Ibid., 200. In a second letter bearing the same date Norris identified the man with the scarred face as Villenus, who, according to Norris had been in prison at Rochelle for conspiring to kill Condé, but Villenus had later escaped. Ibid.

one another if they planned on invading England.¹⁰³ For Norris, Mary was a magnet for French and Catholic desires to intervene in Britain.

Norris wrote Elizabeth on March 17, to let her know how his meeting had gone regarding the English Queen's desire to assure the French King she would not fight against him or aid rebels. Norris reported that on March 12, he had met with the King, Anjou and the Queen Mother. He stated that all their responses had been designed to try to convince Elizabeth to give Mary her liberty and help her regain her realm and country. Norris reported that he had returned again on March 14 and 15, and the Queen Mother had told Norris that if the English Queen wanted to end her troubles she should set Mary free and take a husband. The King also told Norris that he never planned on making preparations to go to Scotland.¹⁰⁴ The French royal family, at least openly, had no plans to help Mary.

Despite Norris's concerns about French military intervention, King Charles of France tried to help Mary through diplomatic means. the French King wrote his ambassador in London on April 12, to demand that Elizabeth withdraw her forces from Scotland and set Mary at liberty.¹⁰⁵ Charles was hoping he could help Mary without resorting to military action, and that Elizabeth would free Mary based upon his request. Elizabeth would not do so.

The third religious war in France that had started in September of 1568 stretched into 1570, and Norris continued to send correspondence back to England concerning this struggle. However, Norris began to appear more concerned with how events in France might affect England, and he spent a great deal of time discussing threats from France directed toward England. Norris believed that some of the Catholics in France, with help from Catholics elsewhere, wanted to invade his island

¹⁰³Ibid., 204.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 204-205.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 217-218.

country. The toppled Queen of Scotland, Mary, who was related to the powerful Guise family in France, was the source of much of this threat, according to Norris. The Catholic in France whom Norris most feared was the Cardinal of Lorraine, also a member of the Guise family, whom Norris believed had made specific threats to go to Britain to help the Scottish Queen. The Duke of Anjou, younger brother of the French King, also had made some indication he wanted to go to help the Scottish Queen. Thus Norris's greatest worry was no longer the condition of the French Protestants at the hand of French Catholics, but how these French Catholics might harm his own country.

Norris's worries might have seemed justified when the Northern rebellion erupted among some Catholic Lords in the North of England, although the loyal English forces quickly crushed the rebellion. Norris believed, as some modern historians have found, that the French war was part of a broader European conflict.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, Norris believed that some Catholics under the leadership of the Cardinal of Lorraine were trying to spread rebellion in England to help the Scottish Queen Mary, and modern historian Charles Wilson has echoed Norris's concerns in his own findings.¹⁰⁷ These historians, however, have failed to document Norris's role in warning of the possibility of French Catholic forces aiding rebellion in England.

¹⁰⁶See Holt, 50-75; Knecht, 34-41.

¹⁰⁷See Wilson, 121.

Chapter 5

Peace in France and Home to England

The third French religious war in France between the Protestant Huguenots and the Catholic government, which had begun in the fall of 1568, continued into 1570, and the conflict appeared to be spreading to Britain. In the North of England in late 1569, some Catholic Lords revolted, but the English authorities quickly crushed the rebellion. Also, the French government was trying to get Elizabeth to release Mary, the deposed Queen of Scotland, who had fled to England. Further, the French had made some suggestions that they might take military action in an effort to help restore Mary to her throne, and perhaps to also help her with her claim to the English throne. Although Norris continued to worry about French intervention in Britain, he also hoped for the end of the third French war of religion and for the opportunity to return home to England.

Norris and the English would continue to be concerned about possible French intervention in England. Also, Norris would play an active role in attempting to assure that the French did not send any forces to Britain. Elizabeth would trust him with the duty of persuading the French King to not aid to Scotland to help Queen Mary. Furthermore, Norris would show his abilities by successfully keeping a onetime Irish rebel from acting against England, by instead allowing him to go to London under protection from the Queen. Finally Norris only received help in France at his own insistence, when Elizabeth sent his successor. Throughout his ambassadorship, Elizabeth continued to show her trust in Norris.

Norris wrote Elizabeth on April 13, to tell her of a meeting he had had with the Spanish ambassador in France. He reported that they had talked about a reconciliation between the English and Spanish monarchs, with Elizabeth either contacting Alva, as the Spanish ambassador suggested, or the Spanish King, as Norris suggested. Norris also stated that he had heard that the Spanish forces in the Low countries were

supporting English rebels, which the Spanish ambassador denied.¹ Norris believed that England should make peace with Spain, which would counteract threats in France.

Norris also believed peace in France might soon be possible, and wrote Cecil on April 13 and 14 regarding a possible peace. He told Cecil in the first letter that there was a lot of talk about peace but that the biggest hurdle was over the exercise of religion, which the Protestant princes wanted to be allowed throughout the country.² The next day Norris informed Cecil of the progress of the peace negotiations, and also thanked Cecil for his help to him and his family.³ Norris, in a departure from his previous letters, did not put the blame for the lack of peace on the Catholics in general or on the Cardinal of Lorraine, but found the obstacle to peace was the Protestant demand for religious freedom throughout France (although Norris likely would have believed the Protestants were justified in this demand). Also, his thanks to Cecil for aid to him and his family likely was an indication of the strain the ambassadorship was putting on him.

The misunderstanding between Elizabeth and King Charles of France regarding the use of forces in Scotland is shown in a letter to Norris from Elizabeth giving her ambassador certain instructions to tell the French King. She instructed Norris to tell the King that she was displeased that he wanted her to keep her army from going into Scotland. Elizabeth also told Norris to inform the French King that he had apparently expressed his displeasure through his ambassador because someone had entreated him to do so rather than because the King was actually displeased, and Elizabeth suggested that the King should speak for himself. This comment is apparently a reflection on the weakness of Charles and the fact that someone other than him was making decisions. Elizabeth also told Norris that rebels against her were maintained by

¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 218.*

²*Ibid.*

³*Ibid.*, 219.

certain people on the border of Scotland. However, she requested Norris to inform the King that she had no intention of making war with Scotland. Elizabeth also accused Queen Mary of directing some in Scotland to make war against England, but stated that if Mary would keep all treaties, including some designed to allow her liberty, Elizabeth would see that Mary would “come to some good end”⁴ Thus Elizabeth continued to promise freedom for Mary in order to placate the French.

Norris reported to Elizabeth on May 7, about peace negotiations in France, before he had received her recent letter to him. Norris stated that the French Government was proclaiming that it had offered the Huguenots eight towns. However, the Huguenot representatives told Norris that no such offer was made to them and requested that he tell Elizabeth not to believe the French ambassador in that regard. The Huguenot representatives also wanted Norris to tell Elizabeth to persuade King Charles to make peace with them and to grant reasonable protections for their safety and exercise of religion. They further requested Norris to relate to Elizabeth that if she would use her name in these demands the Huguenots would be prepared to be in her service. As if to show that they were already serving her, the Huguenot deputies told Norris to tell Elizabeth that they were preventing the sending of aid from France into Scotland and Ireland.⁵ With Norris’s willing help, the Huguenots were trying to garner more aid from Elizabeth, and used her worries about rebellion in her own country to try to persuade her to give more aid.

The French ambassador to England, de la Mothe Fénelon, had an audience with Queen Elizabeth in May regarding Queen Mary. He requested in the name of the French King for Elizabeth to withdraw her forces from Scotland. Queen Elizabeth responded that in order to satisfy the French King’s wishes he should send a representative to Scotland and get them to surrender or at least abandon the English

⁴Ibid., 238.

⁵Ibid., 243.

fugitives there and then she would withdraw her forces. Elizabeth also promised to “proceed with all diligence” in the restoration of Mary.⁶ Again, Elizabeth wanted to assure the French that she was planning on aiding Mary.

Elizabeth wrote Norris on May 23, concerning her discussion with the French ambassador about withdrawing forces from Scotland, and restoring the Queen of Scotland to her Kingdom. Elizabeth emphasized to Norris that the main thing he should do was to try to prevent the French King from sending forces into Scotland.⁷ This shows that Elizabeth’s main goal in her discussions with the French ambassador was to try to prevent French troops from coming to Scotland and that her statements regarding releasing Mary were only to reassure the ambassador. Moreover, she entrusted Norris with the duty of preventing French forces from coming to Britain.

According to Norris, in a letter to Elizabeth dated June 8, King Charles of France, upon learning that Elizabeth had sent troops to Scotland, sent a packet to some of Mary’s supporters in Scotland to find out which ones would support her cause and would support a league with the French, and some did pledge their support. Also, some wanted arms from France to help against the English, whom they feared would conquer Scotland and possibly take the infant Prince (the future King James I of England and James VI of Scotland). The French government decided to send these Scottish supporters 5000 troops if peace were made in France, and King Charles was desirous to have a peace to be able to send troops. Also, Norris reported that Mary had sent letters to Scotland regarding how her subjects should treat the English rebels there. Finally, Norris stated that Huguenots at Brittany who had not taken up arms were assessed a tax of 60,000 francs monthly.⁸ In contrast to Norris’s statements, the French King instructed his ambassador on June 10, to tell Elizabeth that the French

⁶Ibid., 252-253.

⁷Ibid., 254.

⁸Ibid., 263-264.

King had called back the captains he had already sent toward Scotland and hoped the English Queen would also recall her forces.⁹ Thus, Norris may have exaggerated the willingness of France to intervene in Scotland.

Norris wrote Elizabeth on June 15, to report his meeting with the French King three days earlier. Norris had reported to Charles as Elizabeth had directed him in letters dated May 2 and May 23, concerning the Queen's sending of an army to Scotland and the suppression of the Northern rebellion. When the King connected the invasion to the imprisonment of Mary, Norris reported that he had told the King that Elizabeth had endeavored to reunite the Scottish Queen with her subjects. The King also told Norris that the best way for England to have tranquillity was to set the Scottish Queen free and help her regain her realm, from which she could control the border. Norris, following Elizabeth's instructions to try to keep the French King from sending forces into Scotland, stated that the English forces had in no way harmed the Scottish crown or its alliance with France and that the King should thus not send forces into Scotland. Norris also told Elizabeth that if she were to set Mary free, she should do it of her own accord rather than because of pressure from France, as Norris feared the situation was making the French faction in Scotland stronger. Norris did not want Mary to attribute the release to French pressure.¹⁰ The focal point in France for Norris continued to be to prevent French forces from going to Scotland.

Norris also wrote Cecil the same day, and repeated that the French King's intermeddling between Elizabeth and Mary would give him greater credibility with the Scottish nobility and cause Mary to acknowledge the help of France upon her release. He also stated that if Mary were released, the French thought Mary might marry Anjou and thus give him the possession of Scotland and a claim to the crown of England. Norris also recommended that despite the French King's promise to refrain from

⁹*Ibid.*, 264.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 267-268.

sending troops to Scotland, Elizabeth should keep ships near Dumbarton. Also, Norris reported that there was talk of peace in France, and that nobles and gentlemen, tiring of the war, received permission from the King to return home.¹¹ Norris appeared more concerned about possible French influence in England than about a possible peace in France.

Moreover, Norris worried that peace in France would bring greater problems for England, and was particularly concerned about the Cardinal of Lorraine. Norris reported to both Elizabeth and Cecil on June 20 that Lorraine had stated at council that once peace was made the reputation of the French crown required that war be declared against England, as Elizabeth had supported rebels against the King. Due to his worry about the Cardinal of Lorraine, Norris reported that he was making sure to observe closely the Cardinal's activities.¹² Norris continued to believe that Lorraine was the greatest threat to England.

Norris wrote Cecil on June 27 about a French diplomatic mission to help Mary. He stated that there was a man, M. Poligny, who was formerly a Protestant who had served the Princes of Navarre and Condé, but who had been reconciled to the French King and had recently gone into England to perform an "enterprise" for the Scottish Queen. Norris explained that Poligny had been commissioned to solicit Queen Elizabeth for delivery of Mary, to confer with the Scottish Queen, and to then go into Scotland.¹³ Norris wanted to keep Cecil informed of any possible French forays into Britain.

Norris returned to writing about the conditions of the religious war in France. In a letter dated July 9, to Cecil, he stated that the "long lingering peace" was still prevented by two points of disagreement: the payment of the *reiters* of the Huguenots, and the

¹¹Ibid., 268-269.

¹²Ibid., 274.

¹³Ibid., 280.

reinstatement of the Protestant officers to their former offices and estates.¹⁴ Norris stated later in the month that the sticking points preventing peace were the payment of the *reiters* and towns for Huguenot security.¹⁵ Norris gave more details to Elizabeth about the peace negotiations in a letter dated July 23. He reported that negotiations were continuing but that there were great difficulties in accommodating the differences between the sides regarding the payment of mercenaries, and the towns to be given the Protestants. He also stated that King had agreed to many of the other articles such as restitution of estates and privileges, amnesty and releasing of prisoners. Norris believed that there would soon be peace, although he stated that the Nuncio of the Pope, seeing that the Protestants were demanding the exercise of religion in the counties of Avignon and Vienne, which belonged to the Pope, had declared that no peace could be holy if made with those outside the Church. Also, Norris stated that the clergy and city of Paris had offered to pay to continue the war for eight more months.¹⁶ However, Norris told both Elizabeth and Cecil on July 9, that despite the talk of peace both sides still looked for occasions to harass one another,¹⁷ indicating that he saw blame on both sides. Norris believed that Catholics, both in and outside of France, were hindering peace in the third French religious war.

On July 22, Norris wrote to Cecil about Conor O'Brien, Earl of Thomond, who was seeking pardon from the Queen for some unstated offense, likely rebellion, and Norris would expend great effort in trying to resolve the situation. Thomond told Norris that if he did not receive the pardon he would raise troops in France to take to Ireland.¹⁸ Norris reported to Cecil on July 23, that he was worried that Thomond would be swayed

¹⁴Ibid., 291.

¹⁵Ibid., 296.

¹⁶Ibid., 297.

¹⁷Ibid., 291.

¹⁸Ibid., 296.

by French “tampering,” and was working to prevent that.¹⁹ Two days later Norris requested that Cecil quickly recall Thomond to England, as he would otherwise work mischief at the French court.²⁰ Elizabeth wrote Norris on July 30, regarding Thomond. She told Norris to have Thomond go to England as she was inclined to show him grace and would be inclined to mercy. Also Norris was to give Thomond assurance in his own handwriting that if he did not find a favorable answer in England he could depart.²¹ Norris noted to Elizabeth and Cecil on August 3, that Thomond was still telling the French King that he could do him service in Ireland and Scotland.²² Thus, Norris was greatly worried that the French might work some mischief in Ireland through Thomond and would expend great effort in trying to get him out of France.

Norris continued to write and express worry about Thomond. In letters to both Cecil and Elizabeth dated August 9, Norris reported that if Thomond failed in France, he would go to Spain to offer the Spanish castles in Ireland.²³ However, Norris told Elizabeth that Thomond was afraid to go to England because of possible imprisonment, and would only go if Norris assured him by signing a letter stating that he would not be imprisoned. The ambassador wanted to know if the Queen would grant Thomond a pardon. Norris noted that he had complied with Thomond’s request and had written a letter, but required Thomond to write in his hand under seal that he would not thereafter make any attempt against Elizabeth. Norris gave Thomond some money and sent him to Elizabeth and requested her to take him in her mercy.²⁴ Norris believed it was important for Thomond to receive a pardon so that he would not be a threat.

Norris, however, also expressed doubts about Thomond’s trustworthiness. He

¹⁹Ibid., 298.

²⁰Ibid., 300.

²¹Ibid., 301-302.

²²Ibid., 303, 304.

²³Ibid., 310-311.

²⁴Ibid., 310. Norris later requested reimbursement from Cecil for the money he had given Thomond. Ibid., 359.

noted in a letter to Elizabeth dated August 11, that persons in France were using great persuasions to convince Thomond not to go into England, and that they could not be sure about him until he arrived.²⁵ Norris also wrote Cecil and noted that Thomond had received great sums of money from the Queen Mother and others. Norris wrote on the same day, August 13, to request Cecil's aid in helping Thomond find reconciliation with the Queen, stating that Thomond wanted to make amends for past wrongdoing and could serve her in Ireland.²⁶ On August 23, Norris noted to Cecil that he was sending Thomond to Elizabeth, along with his servant Richard Huddleston, but reported that Thomond was still receiving offers from the French to help them gain land in Ireland.²⁷ Despite his doubts about Thomond, Norris had helped him go to England, because worried that he might do more harm if left in France.

Thomond did finally arrive in England, but that apparently did not end the threat of a Catholic power using him to harm Elizabeth's domains. Thomond wrote Norris on October 10, after he had arrived on the island, asking the ambassador to send a letter to the Privy council, and gave Norris assurances that he would be faithful to Elizabeth.²⁸ Norris continued to worry about Thomond and reported to Leicester and Cecil on October 22, that an Irishman had declared to him that Thomond would try to leave England for Ireland, and apparently cause problems for Elizabeth there, although Norris was not sure whether he should believe him.²⁹ Thus, Norris had successfully arranged for Thomond to go to England, but was still not sure if Thomond would be loyal.³⁰

Norris and Elizabeth continued their correspondence concerning the fate of the Huguenots. Elizabeth told Norris in her letter dated July 30, that she would send a

²⁵Ibid., 314.

²⁶Ibid., 318-319.

²⁷Ibid., 323.

²⁸Ibid., 360.

²⁹Ibid., 359-360.

³⁰Norris's worries about Thomond appear to have been unfounded. Thomond would be loyal to Elizabeth in fighting in Ireland. See Rowse, *Expansion*, 421, 427.

message to the King and Queen Mother to further the common cause with the Queen of Navarre and the princes leading the Huguenots.³¹ Norris reported to Elizabeth on August 3, that the representatives of the Protestants had returned to Paris to petition the French King for the exercise of religion near Paris and to allow preaching in the chambers of the Princes and noblemen at court and for payment of *reiters* for whom they had to borrow money. Norris reported that because the King noticed the great extremity of the Protestants he “waxed harder in granting their requests,” and denied them the exercise of religion within the court or within ten miles of Paris and would only pay part of the money due the *reiters*. Norris did note that the King had granted the Protestants the exercise of religion in two towns in every province and in the homes of gentlemen. Norris also stated that the ambassador of Spain had offered the French King help to continue the war, saying that it would be a great dishonor to make peace with the Protestants, but the King stated that he wanted to reach an accord with his subjects.³² Norris found that the French King was inclined to grant the Huguenots some privileges, but still believed he could be influenced against them.

The King and the Huguenots would soon make peace. Norris told Cecil that the French wanted Elizabeth to write or send some representative to help them make peace.³³ However, on August 4, both the King and the Queen Mother wrote to Elizabeth to tell her from St. Germain that peace had been concluded.³⁴ This peace, unlike the peace of Longjumeau ending the second war, was “extremely favorable to the Huguenots.” However, it could be interpreted as “either a genuine attempt to heal the religious division[s]” in France or as “another trap designed to lull the Huguenots into a false sense of security.”³⁵ Norris showed both interpretations in his correspondence

³¹ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 302.

³² *Ibid*, 303-304.

³³ *Ibid*, 304.

³⁴ *Ibid*.

³⁵ Knecht, “Catherine de Medici,” 20.

about the peace, as will be seen.

Despite his call for clemency for Thomond, Norris told Leicester that the Queen needed to be more forceful against others who had made attempts against her. He also stated that she was correct to send out ships, and recommended that she make an alliance with German Princes or some other Protestants.³⁶ Norris believed that Catholics would form a league against England and other Protestant states, and recommended that Elizabeth seek to form a similar Protestant league. In fact, while Charles IX was contemplating the formation of a Catholic league against England, Elizabeth was contemplating a league with German Protestants against France.³⁷ The two countries, wary of one another, but not ready to come to blows, sought aid if a conflict did arise.

Norris also wrote to Leicester on August 9, about the peace in France that was being forged. He noted that while the peace had been concluded on August 4, there were still articles to be worked out. Norris stated that the French King's brother had claimed that no Protestant preaching would be allowed in his territories, which Norris stated won him the approval of the Catholics, who were always prepared to use poison or other treasons to enforce their designs, according to Norris. He also stated that the Spanish ambassador had talked against the peace, to which the King had responded that he was making peace with his subjects as the Spanish King had done with the Moors. Norris was still wary of King Charles, however, stating that he had only won over the Huguenot deputies with "fair words and promises," and requested that Elizabeth send over someone "of honour" to request the King to be favorable to the Huguenots.³⁸ Norris still had a great distrust of the Catholics in power, and perhaps felt

³⁶*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 311.*

³⁷Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the policy of Queen Elizabeth*. Vol. 1. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), 82-83.

³⁸*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 311-312.*

he was inadequate to help the Huguenots alone.

Norris found that this peace was more reasonable in some respects than the previous one. Norris related to Elizabeth and Cecil on August 11, that the peace had been enrolled in the Parliament. He also had good news for Elizabeth about Lorraine, stating that this Cardinal was not admitted to council and that the King had chosen for his counselors those of the religion, but still warned that Elizabeth should keep her navy ready against possible French troops coming toward Scotland.³⁹ While Norris believed the peace might be good for the Huguenots, he must have been worried that an end to the fighting in France might allow the French to send troops toward Britain.

Norris's time as ambassador was coming to an end, and Norris was also worrying about his personal fortunes. He thanked Elizabeth on August 3, for granting him a license for transporting wool.⁴⁰ Norris also told Cecil on the same day that it would be good if he would speedily send for him, and promised to serve him well in England.⁴¹ Thus Norris was ready to return home, and was trying to arrange his financial resources.

London had also prepared a replacement for Norris. In August Elizabeth sent Francis Walsingham to France, and instructed him to meet with the King after a conference with Norris.⁴² Elizabeth had apparently dispatched Walsingham to France in response to Norris's request for Elizabeth to send some "person of honour" to intervene with the French King in negotiations on behalf of the Huguenots, and Elizabeth had intended for Walsingham to arrive in time to help in the negotiations of peace.⁴³ Norris's

³⁹Ibid., 314

⁴⁰Ibid., 304.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid. Walsingham had been a member of parliament, and then had come to court under Cecil, who later placed Walsingham over his secret agents. Walsingham spoke four languages and was a skillful diplomat with a good knowledge of international politics. Weir, 216. Walsingham would later serve as Secretary of State for 17 years until his death in 1590. Bindoff, 296-297.

⁴³*Walsingham*, 90.

influence was apparent in the instructions Elizabeth sent with Walsingham. Elizabeth told Walsingham to try to persuade the French King to show favor to the Huguenots. Elizabeth also stated that her forays against Catholics were different than the French fight against the Huguenots, since her crown was put in jeopardy, while the Protestant religion espoused by many of the French subjects did not threaten his title.⁴⁴ Despite Elizabeth's protestations that her actions were justified, "while Charles encouraged English rebels, Elizabeth harbored Huguenot refugees, loaned them money, and assisted them in the levy of German mercenaries."⁴⁵ Thus, Charles certainly would not have agreed with the differences in what he saw as rebels against him, the Huguenots, and those who rebelled against Elizabeth, and the French King certainly would have felt justified in encouraging English rebels in light of Elizabeth's aid to the Huguenots.

By August 21, Walsingham was starting to perform the duties of an ambassador, but Norris also continued in his assignment. Walsingham wrote Cecil on that date to report about a meeting he had with the Queen Mother and King, and gave the English Queen's congratulations on the peace and the status of Queen Mary.⁴⁶ On August 31, Norris, still acting as ambassador, told Elizabeth that the peace had brought a sense of community among the lower classes, and that there was not really a reconciliation among the nobility. Norris also reported that there were those who believed that the King would pacify the Protestant gentlemen and captains to cause them to give up their arms. Others, according to Norris, believed that the two factions would be joined to attack England. He also stated that the Duke of Anjou was prepared to go into England by way of Scotland. However, Norris had some good news for England and the Huguenots, reporting that the Cardinal of Lorraine was now in disgrace, and that Montmorency held sway at court.⁴⁷ Although Walsingham had arrived in France, Norris

⁴⁴*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 314.*

⁴⁵*Walsingham, 83.*

⁴⁶*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 325.*

⁴⁷*Ibid., 326.*

still continued in his office as ambassador, and found promise in the peace in France, but worried about potential problems for the Huguenots and for England.

Norris reported to Cecil on September 6, that the French King had declared against sending forces into Scotland, partly because of the English forces already there and partly because Elizabeth had reassured him about releasing Queen Mary. Terms were made to pay *reiters* on both sides, and German Princes had written King Charles encouraging him to accept a good peace.⁴⁸ Thus, at least for the time being, no official French forces would be sent to Scotland, according to the French King. However, the fact that both Elizabeth and Charles were willing to threaten to send forces to Scotland encouraged the other to do so. If Charles sent more men to Scotland it would only encourage Elizabeth to send more, and her sending of forces would tend to cause Charles to want to send more.⁴⁹ The wary monarchs each wanted to guard against the forces of the other, but in taking actions to do so they only encouraged the preparation of more forces.

Norris later found more to be optimistic about the peace, particularly since the Cardinal of Lorraine had lost his influence at the French court. On September 23, Norris told Cecil that everything was quiet in France, “old grudges seem[ed] utterly buried, and men live[d] in good hope” that peace would continue, all of which Norris attributed to the fact that Lorraine had fallen from favor and was no longer in the court or the council. However, Norris did have some worries for England, claiming that some of the French King’s Scottish guard had departed to give comfort to the faction of Mary.⁵⁰ Norris reported a meeting with the French King to tell him that Elizabeth had no intention of using her navy to try to take Calais or do anything else detrimental to the interests of France.⁵¹ The peace was good for the Huguenots, according to Norris, but

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 331.

⁴⁹*Walsingham*, 83.

⁵⁰*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 343.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 344.

perhaps risky for the English, and he worked to avoid problems for England.

Norris reported further events that might cause concern in England. On September 29, Norris told Elizabeth that the Pope had approved a divorce of Mary and her husband Bothwell, so that a marriage between the Scottish Queen and Anjou could be arranged.⁵² Also, the Queen Mother was threatening that if Elizabeth did not restore Mary to her estate as promised, the French King would send 3000 footmen to help the Scottish Queen.⁵³ In a letter to Cecil the same day, Norris not only gave similar news about Mary, but also noted that the Duke of Alva was shortly to send soldiers to Scotland, and that the ambassadors of Spain, Scotland (apparently those who supported Mary and the Catholic cause) and the Nuncio of the Pope were trying to solicit men and arms from the French King, apparently to use in support of Mary.⁵⁴ Thus, Norris continued to worry about French and other Catholics intervening in Britain.

Despite his hopes for the peace, Norris again began to find his own treatment similar to what he had received previously in January and February of 1569, when he felt he was being shunned by French authorities.⁵⁵ Norris reported to Cecil on October 7, that he was again being treated differently than other ambassadors. He stated that the representative of the King in charge of entertainment for the ambassadors told him he had not been invited to the wedding of the Duke of Guise because of fears over differences with the ambassador from Spain and the relationship of the Guise family to the Queen of Scots. Also, the Duke of Nevers also held a banquet for the Duke of Guise and had also not invited Norris.⁵⁶ Norris again believed he was being shunned by the authorities in France.

⁵²When Queen Mary had surrendered to rebels in 1567, Bothwell had been given a safe conduct to leave Scotland, and he later went to Denmark. However, the King of Denmark imprisoned him and Bothwell later died insane in prison. Somerset, 196.

⁵³*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 346.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 347.

⁵⁵See *ibid.*, 20, 30.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 350.

Norris, however, had more important things than his personal treatment to occupy his mind. Norris reported to Cecil on October 7, that the French King had sent munitions and men to Amiens, and Norris worried these would be used to aid the Queen of Scots. Also, this letter from Norris indicates that Huguenots who had fled to England during the war were trying to return to France but frontier towns such as Calais and Boulogne would not receive them.⁵⁷ Thus the peace for the Huguenots did not end worries for England and Huguenots who had fled there and who hoped to return to France after the peace was established.

The leaders of France and England continued to negotiate about the fate of the Scottish Queen. Norris wrote Elizabeth on October 19, to state that he had an audience with the French King and had told him that the treaty between Mary and Elizabeth had been harmed partly by doings of Mary and partly because her subjects in Scotland to whom she had given authority had aided rebels against Elizabeth. Norris also reported that he had told the king that Elizabeth had then sent two from her privy council to meet with Mary. Norris also complained to the King that there were men being prepared to go to Scotland. The King responded that he was glad to hear of Elizabeth's good understanding with Mary, and stated that the forces from France prepared to go to Scotland were intended only to aid Mary.⁵⁸ The King also wrote Norris on October 17, to state that he was glad to hear of Elizabeth's favorable intentions toward Mary, and explained that he had sent troops and munitions to Dumbarton because of an ancient alliance with Scotland and because of his relationship with Mary.⁵⁹ Norris also wrote Cecil on October 20, concerning Mary. He did not think freeing Mary would cause problems for England, but recommended that she be married before being set free or she would marry the Duke of Anjou.⁶⁰ Thus Norris was acting as a mediator between

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid., 358.

⁵⁹Ibid., 358-359.

⁶⁰Ibid., 359.

the French and English monarchs to avoid conflict over Mary.

By October 22, Norris was reporting problems with the peace in France. He stated that authorities in Paris had determined that no Protestants would be readers in any University in the capital city, and that several Protestants who had recently returned would lose their jobs and homes. Also, Norris reported that no bookseller or printer could sell scriptures and authorities had searched homes and confiscated bibles and testaments.⁶¹ Earlier in the month the University of Paris had petitioned the King to forbid any Protestant from holding a post of authority at the university and to give the university the power to search for and seize any heretical books. Charles granted these demands and issued a proclamation forbidding any Protestant from holding any office or teaching at the university and authorized doctors appointed by the University to search out and seize prohibited books.⁶² Norris wrote Cecil a couple of days later and stated that some Catholics had interpreted the King's edict to allow opponents to work trouble for the Huguenots rather than to act simply as a warrant. He explained that one person had been forcibly put out of his house and could obtain no redress from the King.⁶³ For Norris, this peace after the third religious war was beginning to seem like the last one, which ended the second religious war, where he believed Protestants continued to be mistreated.

Norris reported further movements from France toward Britain. On October 29, Norris noted to Cecil that there were troops departing from Brittany to go to Scotland and stated that two Catholic Englishmen who had come to Paris from Alva were boasting that by March the Spanish Duke's army would be in Ireland or Scotland. He also stated the Cardinal of Lorraine had obtained some threatening letters from the French King to Elizabeth to set the Queen of Scots at liberty.⁶⁴ If what Norris was

⁶¹Ibid., 360

⁶²Ibid., 361.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid., 354-365.

stating were true, the Cardinal of Lorraine had returned to the good graces of the King and was again in a position of influence.

Norris was also receiving correspondence from England concerning his return home. Cecil wrote Norris on November 6, with good news for Norris, stating that Walsingham had been charged to relieve Norris from his “long wearisome place,” and Cecil promised he would try to hasten his departure.⁶⁵ On November 29, a G. Tattersal sent Norris news about his affairs in England, giving him some progress of certain lawsuits for different pieces of land.⁶⁶ On December 16, Cecil sent a letter with his son to Norris informing the ambassador that he had been ill and absent from the court for 20 days but his son could inform him how Walsingham would relieve him of his charge.⁶⁷ While Norris was continuing in his duties as ambassador, he was receiving news about his return home.

Norris continued his duties, and wrote more about his concerns regarding Mary. He informed Cecil on November 29 about the announced dissolution of Mary’s marriage, based on an accused rape by Bothwell, whom the Pope banished from Christendom. Norris recommended that all efforts be used to persuade Elizabeth not to give in to Mary’s demands, fearing that the joining of France and Scotland would work against England’s interests. He also worried about the intervention of the Cardinal of Lorraine and advised that they should deal in these matters with Mary and not allow the French King to intervene.⁶⁸ While eagerly awaiting his imminent return home, Norris continued to worry about possible threats against England.

Norris reported to Cecil on December 13, that he had chosen not to go to the wedding of the King of France. He stated that he had informed the King of his decision and explained to him that he was not coming to avoid contention, apparently with

⁶⁵Ibid., 367.

⁶⁶Ibid., 373.

⁶⁷Ibid., 377.

⁶⁸Ibid., 372.

Spain, and that his absence should not be seen as a slight.⁶⁹ Norris, who believed he had been slighted at not being invited to several official functions because of his support of the Huguenots, perhaps wanted to return the favor.

On December 19, Elizabeth, in Cecil's hand, sent instructions for Walsingham to take over the duties of ambassador in France. Norris was to introduce Walsingham to the French King as his successor. Also, among other duties, Walsingham was to do all he could to persuade the French King to enforce the Edict of Pacification in favor of the Protestants. Norris was to give Walsingham details concerning the preparation of men and ships in Brittany that were supposedly going to go to Scotland.⁷⁰ These instructions reflect the impact Norris's correspondence had on the opinion of the English Queen, in that she was worried about the treatment of the Huguenots and possible French invasion into Scotland, themes repeatedly listed in Norris's letters.

In December, Cecil prepared a proposal for Elizabeth to marry the Duke of Anjou.⁷¹ This would solve the problem of Mary marrying Anjou and would also benefit England directly. Furthermore, the Huguenots saw the potential marriage between Elizabeth and Anjou as their "salvation,"⁷² and as "security" for the peace of St. Germain.⁷³ This reflects the fact that by the end of the third French war of religion, English aid to the Huguenots had helped make Elizabeth into a Protestant champion.

⁶⁹Ibid., 375-376.

⁷⁰Ibid., 378. Elizabeth also instructed Walsingham to continue to deny English aid to the Huguenots, and gave a promise in exchange that English troops would come to the aid of the royal French army if the Huguenots revolted again. Marie Amélie de Pitteurs, "Un Ambassadeur en France sous Elisabeth (1570-1574)," *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* 23 (1909): 294.

⁷¹*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 383-385. The idea for the proposal apparently came from Catherine de Medici, who had written a letter to the French ambassador De la Fénélon in October of 1570, to start negotiations with the English for this possible union. Ernest G. Atkinson, "The Cardinal of Châtillon in England," *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London* 3 (1888-1891): 246-247.

⁷²De Pitteurs, 295.

⁷³Atkinson, 246.

Despite the fact that he was soon to be replaced as ambassador, Norris continued his duties, writing to both the Queen and her secretary about the state of the Huguenots in France and threats to Elizabeth's dominions from France. Norris sent to Elizabeth on January 3, a copy of a speech made to the French King by the ambassador of the Protestant Prince, apparently Navarre, and told her that if she sent something similar it would strike fear into enemies of the Protestants and give comfort to those of the religion.⁷⁴ He told the Queen that there was talk of Frenchmen going to Ireland, and told Cecil in a letter the same day that the Cardinal of Lorraine was informed of and apparently involved with, some people trying to start a revolt in Ireland.⁷⁵ Norris continued writing about Ireland in a letter to Cecil dated November 8, advising the secretary that there were certain cities in Ireland that should be fortified.⁷⁶ On January 3, 1571, Norris also accused Lorraine of conspiring with some in Spain to try to help Mary.⁷⁷ Thus Norris found that the Cardinal of Lorraine still had some influence and was a cause of concern for England, despite the fact that he had been out of favor at the French court.

At the start of the new year, 1571, Norris was finally seeing his ambassadorship come to a close. Walsingham wrote Cecil on January 2, to inform him that he had arrived at Boulogne on January 1, 1571.⁷⁸ Walsingham was to continue efforts begun by Norris. Norris stated in a letter to Elizabeth dated January 3, that some officials sympathetic to the Protestant cause had asked him about a possible marriage between Elizabeth and Anjou.⁷⁹ Walsingham wrote Cecil on January 27, concerning the possible match between Anjou and the English Queen, stating that the Pope, the King of Spain

⁷⁴*Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71, 387.*

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 387-388.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 388.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 387-388.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 387.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 388.

and what he termed “the rest of the confederacy” were opposed to the marriage.⁸⁰ Thus, while Protestants apparently favored the possible marriage between Elizabeth and Anjou, Catholics outside of France were opposed to the idea.

Norris finally announced his official replacement as ambassador. He and Walsingham reported jointly to Elizabeth in a letter dated January 29, that on January 25, Norris had presented Walsingham to the French King as his successor as ambassador.⁸¹ Norris would finally be able to return home.

Norris had served as ambassador for four years. After the disastrous peace of the second religious war in March of 1568, Norris had seen a peace more favorable to the Huguenots, the peace of St. Germain, at the end of the third religious war in August, 1570. After the end of the war, Norris learned that Sir Francis Walsingham was coming to France as his replacement. Before that occurred Norris began negotiation for a possible marriage between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou, which Walsingham would continue. Finally, Norris was able to return to Rycote, his home in Oxfordshire, but he would continue to serve his Queen and country.

After he returned home to England Norris and his family remained close to Elizabeth. When Norris and his wife lost three sons in the Irish war, Elizabeth wrote personally to console the grieving parents.⁸² Also, Leicester and the Queen were often guests of Norris and his wife at Rycote.⁸³ Lady Margery Norris, wife of the ambassador, was black-haired and black-eyed, and Elizabeth referred to her affectionately as “Mine own Crow,” and Lady Norris adored the Queen.⁸⁴ Elizabeth had a special fondness for Norris’s family and kept a close relationship with them. This

⁸⁰Ibid., 395.

⁸¹Ibid., 398.

⁸²Weir, 231.

⁸³Ibid., 395.

⁸⁴Elizabeth Jenkins, *Elizabeth and Leicester*, first American edition, (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1962), 145.

long relationship between the Queen and Norris and his family is also an indication that the monarch was pleased with the service Norris had given and was giving her.

Also, soon after returning home Norris served in the Parliament of 1571, where the main bills Parliament passed were in response to the Northern Rebellion and a Papal Bull against Elizabeth.⁸⁵ In April, 1571, Parliament considered a bill “for the preservation of the Queene’s majestie in the royall estate and crowne of this realme.”⁸⁶ The bill was designed to define as treason any attempt to imagine or practice death or bodily harm against the Queen or even to claim that Elizabeth was not the rightful Queen or was a heretic.⁸⁷ Norris, referred to as the “late ambassador in France,” agreed with the bill and “in a short, myld, and plaine speech,” recommended that to the bill be added a provision or provisions to make it treason to give aid to religious exiles, claiming that these men would conspire against the Queen, which he believed was dangerous, based on his “experience duringe the tyme of his service in France.”⁸⁸ Thus, after his return home Norris continued to worry about problems from religious minorities.

Norris also served in the House of Lords, where he and other members took actions to deal with foreign powers. Norris became a Baron, Lord Norreys de Rycote, and a member of the House of Lords in May of 1572.⁸⁹ In the 1580s he was a member

⁸⁵Neale, 225.

⁸⁶T.E. Hartley, ed., *Proceedings in the Parliaments of Elizabeth I*, Vol.1, 1558-1581 (Leicester: Leicester University Press and Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1981), 203.

⁸⁷Neale, 226.

⁸⁸Hartley, 204, Neale, 228. As passed, the bill disabled anyone from inheriting who claimed the right to the throne for themselves or anyone other than the Queen. Neale, 233.

⁸⁹O’Conor, 29. See also Hartley, 317. Several “openings” for Lords were created as a result of rebellion in the North, when Elizabeth had Norfolk and Northumberland executed and Westmoreland exiled. Norris was one of four Lords made between 1568 and 1572, along with Cecil. Michael A. R. Graves, *The Tudor Parliaments: Crowns, Lords and Commons, 1485-1603* (London and New York: Longman Group Limited, 1985), 134.

of several committees trying to get Elizabeth to take action against Mary, Queen of Scots.⁹⁰ Norris continued to show concern for the Scottish Queen after returning from his ambassadorship, and continued to advise that Elizabeth needed to take some action against the Scottish Queen.

In addition to receiving the Queen from time to time at his home in Rycote, Norris had local duties, and was responsible for putting down a rebellion near his home. Norris served as a county magnate and was required to oversee such things as the repairing of bridges and highways.⁹¹ Norris was also a lord lieutenant, or military leader, in the area where he lived.⁹² Norris's position as a leader in the county and his wealth would make him a target for an uprising, which his position would also make him responsible for quelling. Norris's house was in the center of an area with a history of depopulation and enclosure for sheep, which caused discontent among the lower classes. In late 1596, Norris became one of many targets of a failed murderous rebellion led by a former servant of his, Bartholomew Steer.⁹³ As lord lieutenant, Norris had the duty to act against the plot once it was discovered, until further aid arrived from London.⁹⁴ Norris survived this plot directed against him and others, but death struck at his family while in the service of their queen.

Norris and his wife had six sons, William, John, Henry, Thomas, Edward, and Maximillian.⁹⁵ Four of these sons died fighting in the Queen's service in Ireland, William in 1579, John in 1597, and Henry and Thomas in 1599.⁹⁶ Maximillian died fighting in

⁹⁰Hartley, 369-374. Elizabeth signed a death warrant for Mary on February 1, 1587, and a week later the Scottish Queen was beheaded. Wernham, 381-382.

⁹¹O'Connor, 30.

⁹²Walter, 97. In 1580, Norris's duties led him to be involved in the muster of horses in Oxfordshire, and in 1581, he was responsible for apprehending a Jesuit named Edmund Campion and his associates. O'Connor, 30.

⁹³Walter, 114.

⁹⁴Ibid., 126, 131-132.

⁹⁵Rowse, *Expansion*, 348; O'Connor, 131-133, 151. However, another source lists only five sons, omitting Maximillian. Harrison, 268.

⁹⁶Ibid.

Brittany in 1593.⁹⁷ After the deaths of Henry and Thomas, Elizabeth sent Edward, the only surviving son, home to be with his parents.⁹⁸ In September of 1599, Elizabeth sent the grieving parents a letter, referring to them as “beloved,” praised their “constant resolution” in the face of hardships, and told them that to give a “stay to [their] sorrows” she was sending their remaining son home.⁹⁹ Lady Norris followed her dead children to the grave by December, 1599, and the former ambassador was dead by June, 1601.¹⁰⁰ The Queen he had served so well would die a few years later.

Norris completed his time as ambassador in France having served his Queen and country well, and Elizabeth showed her trust in Norris. After the Northern Rebellion, quickly quelled by Elizabeth’s forces, Elizabeth wanted to keep forces along the Scottish border, where some of the rebels had fled. With the deposed queen of Scotland, Mary, in England, Elizabeth worried that France might send forces to aid her, and entrusted Norris with the task of trying to convince the French royal family to stay out of Britain. Also, the Queen entrusted Norris with the responsibility of convincing a former Irish rebel, Thomond, from joining forces with Catholics in Spain or France, and Norris was successful in this endeavor. These actions by Norris, and the trust shown to him by Elizabeth, show that Norris was not simply an observer, as MacCaffrey has asserted, but also played an active role in diplomacy.¹⁰¹

After he returned home, Norris served in Parliament, both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and took on local responsibilities in his Oxfordshire. While in the lower house of Parliament Norris participated in discussions regarding a bill concerning treason against the Queen, using his experience as ambassador to make a

⁹⁷Rowse, *Expansion*, 348.

⁹⁸Harrison, 268.

⁹⁹Queen Elizabeth I, to Lord Henry Norris and Lady Norris, 6 September, 1599, reprinted in Harrison, 268.

¹⁰⁰O’Conor, 133. Their son Edward became ill and died in 1603. Rowse, *Expansion*, 349.

¹⁰¹See MacCaffrey, 182.

speech urging passage of the bill. In the House of Lords Norris participated in committees urging action against the Scottish Queen Mary, whom the English would execute. Thus, Norris continued to serve his country and Queen after returning from France.

Conclusion

Sir Henry Norris served as ambassador from England to France from 1567 to early 1571, despite having little prior diplomatic experience. His appointment may have come because Queen Elizabeth I wanted to show him favor for two reasons. First, Queen Elizabeth believed that Norris's father had been wrongly accused and put to death when King Henry VIII decided to rid himself of Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth's mother. Second, Norris had married the daughter of a wealthy landowner, which brought him riches and influence, and which may have also helped him receive favor from the Queen. Norris's appointment was opposed by a previous ambassador to France, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, because of his lack of experience, and some historians have downplayed Norris's value as an ambassador.¹ Elizabeth and Cecil, Elizabeth's chief secretary, apparently had confidence in Norris, however, as they left him as ambassador for a couple of years after he asked to be relieved of his duties and during a time when England was worried about French incursions into Britain. Moreover, Elizabeth must have been pleased with his loyalty, as she appointed Norris to the House of Lords a few years after his return to England, and often visited him and his wife at Rycote, their home in Oxfordshire. Furthermore, a review of Norris's correspondence shows that he did have an impact as ambassador, and his time in France was important for the foreign affairs of England.

Norris was strongly Protestant, as was the Privy Council led by Sir William Cecil, to whom Norris addressed much of his correspondence while ambassador. However, Queen Elizabeth was less ardent in her Protestant views than the members of her Privy Council, and the poor result from England's incursion in the first French war of religion in 1562 and 1563, where both sides had joined to drive the English out of France, made

¹See MacCaffrey, 153; Cecil, 394.

the Queen reluctant to interfere, and she did not provide aid to the Protestants in the second war of religion, which lasted from September of 1567 to March of 1568. In fact, she even expressed support for the French Catholic monarchy during this war. In part because of the lack of foreign support, at the end of the second war of Religion French Protestants were forced to make a peace that was less than favorable.

The Peace of Longjumeau, ending the second war of religion in France, did not end the strife between the two factions in France. While the Protestant forces disbanded, those of the King did not. As reported by Norris, and confirmed by other sources, the French Catholics treated the Huguenots badly during this period of “peace.” Norris continued to inform Cecil and Queen Elizabeth about the treatment of the French Protestants, and Elizabeth finally began to express support for the Huguenots through Norris. At first the French authorities did not believe that Elizabeth had actually directed Norris to give the criticisms he had made concerning the treatment of the Huguenots, and the French government sent a representative directly to Elizabeth to inquire if she had really instructed Norris to make the comments he did. Elizabeth confirmed that Norris had been acting under her direction and expressed her support for her ambassador, both to the French authorities and to Norris himself. Thus, Elizabeth had acted to show support for the Huguenots, in large part because of Norris’s correspondence, and expressed support for the ambassador when the French authorities questioned her commitment to him.

While other factors such as worry over of the Spanish intervention in the Netherlands and a fear of threats to England from a France dominated by the strongly Catholic Cardinal of Lorraine helped influence Elizabeth to provide monetary aid to the Huguenots, as well as to allow trade and men from England to benefit them, clearly Norris’s correspondence played an important role in her decision. When the Cardinal of Châtillon, a Protestant who had been forced to leave France, found refuge in England, he documented what he saw as the cruelties against the Huguenots, and he noted that

Elizabeth had already been made aware of these happenings, referring at least in part to what Norris had told her.

The Queen Mother of France, Catherine de Medici, also believed Norris had an influence in the third war of religion, accusing him of sending material to help the Huguenots in his packets to England. Norris denied that he was doing so and denied that Elizabeth was giving financial aid to the Huguenots. Also, about halfway through his ambassadorship, Norris believed he was being shunned by the French authorities because of his support for the Huguenots and believed he was becoming ineffective because they mistrusted him, and he asked Cecil to replace him with someone who could be more effective. The fact that Cecil and Elizabeth kept Norris in France under these circumstances shows the confidence they had in him.

Later in Norris's ambassadorship, Mary, Queen of Scots, became a worry for London and for Norris, who feared that the French might send men to aid the deposed monarch, not only to help her regain her Scottish realm, but also to help her press for her claims to the English throne. The concern over Mary was complicated by a rebellion of some of the Lords in the North of England, and by the fact that some of their followers fled across the Scottish border. Elizabeth sent men to the border to try to capture the rebels, and the French King threatened to send forces to Scotland as well. Elizabeth was worried about the threat of French intervention on the island and trusted Norris with the task of persuading the French King not to send forces. The fact that Elizabeth relied on Norris to help keep the French out of Britain shows that the Queen believed Norris was effective in his diplomatic duties.

Elizabeth would also trust Norris with beginning the efforts to seek a marriage for her with the Duke of Anjou, the brother of the French King. Perhaps in part to prevent a possible marriage between Mary and Anjou, Elizabeth sought to make a marriage with Anjou herself. The French Protestants also saw this as a way of protecting their interests, as Elizabeth had become known as a Protestant champion, and the

Huguenots apparently believed she could serve their interests by forging closer ties to the French Royal family. Norris began the negotiations which were later continued by Sir Francis Walsingham, his replacement, who apparently came to France at the insistence of Norris. The ambassador had requested that Elizabeth send someone of “honour” to persuade the French King to treat the Huguenots well.² While Elizabeth ultimately did not marry Anjou, this episode also showed her trust in Norris.

After he returned home to England Elizabeth continued to demonstrate confidence in Norris. While he served in the House of Commons shortly after returning home, Elizabeth not long thereafter gave him greater honors. Elizabeth made Norris a member of the house of Lords, and Norris also received an appointment to serve as a local leader in Oxfordshire, undoubtedly with Elizabeth’s approval. Clearly, Norris had proved his worth to Elizabeth while serving as ambassador and received more honors from his Queen after returning home

Some historians have ignored or downplayed the ambassadorship of Norris, portraying him as someone who really played no role in diplomacy, but simply only reported what was happening in France. His letters clearly influenced the course of England’s actions toward her neighbor across the English Channel, however, as his urgings played a key role in persuading Elizabeth to provide aid for the Huguenots in the third French religious war. Also, Elizabeth demonstrated her trust in Norris by supporting him when his authority was challenged by the French royalty. Moreover, Elizabeth also trusted Norris to help prevent France from sending forces to Scotland. Norris’s Queen certainly did not ignore his career as ambassador. Finally, in recognition of his services, Elizabeth made Norris a member of the house of Lords.

A study of Norris’s time as ambassador is important. He was a link between two countries that were becoming the most powerful nations in Europe and the world,

²See *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71*, 311-312.

France and England. At this time England was solidifying its position as the most powerful Protestant nation, and France was becoming the most powerful Catholic nation, although both countries had religious minorities that the governments believed threatened the tranquillity of their nations. Norris was close to both governments during this time. Further, while the English ambassadors to France under Henry VIII had spent their time trying to flatter the French king, under Elizabeth they worked closely with the Huguenot leaders, whom they supported.³ Thus a review of Norris's time as ambassador is important not only to show how the English viewed events in France during the second and third religious wars, but also because his correspondence reveals much of how the Huguenots viewed the conflicts. Norris's correspondence shows that the Huguenots believed they were not a threat to the stability of their country if they would be left alone to worship in their own way.

Norris served as an ambassador during a period when religious minorities were starting to develop and spread in Europe, and the Huguenots, as a religious minority, attempted to justify their deviation from the religious majority. Norris held somewhat contradictory views, however. He seemingly had no patience for the religious minority in his own country, the Catholics. However, he did express arguments that the minority Huguenots in France could be loyal to their King while practicing a different religion, and in doing so he echoed the Huguenots' own argument with the French royalty as to why they should be allowed to practice their religion in peace. In doing so he helped bring about the modern concept that a nation could exist with varying religious faiths, all of whom would still be loyal to their country. This accepted fact of life in modern democracies could not simply occur overnight in a Europe where the standard had been that the subjects should practice the religion of their ruler, but needed to evolve slowly.

³Gustave Baguenault de Puchesse, "La Diplomatie Anglaise en France sous Le Règne d'Élisabeth d'après les documents du *Record Office*," *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* 21 (1907): 481-482.

While Norris was certainly not advocating religious pluralism in England or other Protestant nations, his support for the Protestant Huguenots in France did prompt him to promote the idea of religious pluralism in France, since he knew the Huguenots could never totally defeat the French Catholics. The correspondence of Norris clearly states the Huguenot view that they could practice their Protestant religion without being treasonous, and his efforts with the French royal family on behalf of the Huguenots should be seen as part of the evolutionary process of allowing religious diversity in democracies.

Norris played an important part in the relationship between France and England, as he had a large role in shaping this relationship, and his correspondence also gives insights as to how the idea of religious plurality developed in modern, free societies. It is therefore important to study his ambassadorship. The correspondence of Norris during his years as ambassador shows how the two countries viewed religion and dealt with religious minorities. England was beginning to solidify its Protestant nature, while France was trying to deal with its Protestant minority. Norris's correspondence not only shows what was occurring, but it also clearly demonstrates that Norris was an integral part of the foreign diplomacy of England toward France during this period, and it documents some of the growth of the idea of religious pluralism. A study of Norris's ambassadorship has long been warranted.

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